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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the 12 issues of "Parent News" (an electronic Internet magazine for parents, prepared for the National Parent Information Network) published during 1998. Each monthly issue contains feature articles describing the activities of the National Parent Information Network, summarizing research useful to parents, announcing major events and conferences, and addressing issues of interest to parents. Topics of feature articles include: children and the Internet; Down Syndrome; fathering; after school care; television; child care; family uses of technology; grandparenting programs; family meals; parent involvement; young children and racism; the first day of school; bullies; teen driving; adolescents; emergent literacy; drug abuse prevention; mixed-age grouping; supporting working families; parenting education programs; language development; sexuality; adolescent behavior; advocates for special needs children; violence in children; making friends; mental illness in children; conflict resolution; and twins in school. Some articles are reprinted with permission from other sources. Also included in each issue are sections that provide information geared to the interests of parents, including (1) book summaries and reviews; (2) World Wide Web sites; (3) organizations; (4) a calendar of events; and (5) guides, brochures, and fact sheets for parents. (DR)

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PARENT NEWS

A Compilation of 1998 Issues

Volume 4, nos. 1-10*

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***Parent News moved to a bi-monthly publication schedule with the September-October 1998 issue.**

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NPIN
National Parent Information Network

Parent News for January 1998

Volume 4, Number 1

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Parent News Editorial Information

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Editor: Laurel Preece
NPIN Coordinator: Anne Robertson

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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster

Parent News for January 1998

What's New on NPIN

For a listing and description of items that are new on NPIN over the last three months, see the What's New on NPIN section on the NPIN Home Page.

What's New: Resources added to NPIN during December 1997

Several new items have been added to several topical areas in the Resources for Parents / Full Text of Parenting-Related Materials section.

In the Early Childhood: Learning section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *El Reto: !A Leer, América!*
  This booklet for caregivers of children from birth through age five was developed by the AmeriCorps Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center as a project of the Corporation for National Service; the U.S. Department of Education; and the Child Care Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- *Music Appreciation: A universal language for all ages*
  annotation here.

In the Helping Your Child Learn at Home section, the following resources have been added:

- *El Reto: !A Leer, América!*
  This booklet for caregivers of children from birth through age five was developed by the AmeriCorps Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center as a project of the Corporation for National Service; the U.S. Department of Education; and the Child Care Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

In the Child Care (all ages) section, the following resources have been added:

- *White House Focuses Spotlight on Child Care Concerns*
  annotation here.

Reviews or summaries of the following parenting-related books were added to the Parenting Resources: Books section of NPIN:

- *Discipline from Birth to Three: How to Prevent and Deal with Discipline Problems with Babies and*

Toddlers by Jeanne Warren Lindsay and Sally McCullough
- *Breakfast Is Only the Beginning: A Fun-Filled, Practical Guide to Keeping Up with Your Preschooler* by Mark Yeager
- *Postpartum Depression and Child Development* by Lynne Murray (Ed.) and Peter J. Cooper (Ed.)
- *Learning the Rules: The Anatomy of Children's Relationships* by Brian J. Bigelow, Geoffrey Tesson, and John H. Lewko
- *Working Fathers: New Strategies for Balancing Work and Family* by James A. Levine and Todd L. Pittinsky
- *The Parent's Guide to Alternatives in Education: The First In-Depth Guide to the Full Range of Choices in Alternative Schooling, with All the Information You Need to Decide What Kind of Education Is Right for Your Child* by Ronald E. Koetzsch
- *Toddler Adoption: The Weaver's Craft* by Mary Hopkins-Best

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Information on the following parenting-related organizations was added to the Resources for Those Who Work with Parents: Organizations section of NPIN:

- Consumer Product Safety Commission

Information on the following parenting-related newsletters was added to the Parenting Resources: Newsletters section of NPIN:

- *Transition Magazine (Special Issue) Families: It's About Time! = Les familles ont besoin de temps!*
- *Healthy Child Care America*

Several new links to Internet resources were added in the Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents section.

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Parent News for January 1998

January's Feature

Children and the Internet: Several New Initiatives Announced

There are often contradictory beliefs regarding children's access to the Internet. Although many people believe the Internet provides unprecedented access to information, others believe it can be potentially dangerous to children.

All over the world, access to the Internet for children is being promoted through a variety of initiatives. In the United States, for example, the aim is to have all schools in the country linked to the Internet by the end of the millennium (Clyde, 1997). In Australia, it was announced that all schools would be linked by the end of 1996. The rationale for Internet access is based on educational goals and the need for access to information.

This rationale has been supported by a recent study that evaluated research projects produced by fourth- and sixth-graders in seven U.S. cities (Trotter, 1996). Five hundred students in 28 urban elementary and middle schools participated in this study in which school officials were asked to select pairs of similar fourth- or sixth-grade classrooms. The students then began a project on the U.S. civil rights movement using books and other printed materials, computer databases, and CD-ROM encyclopedias. One class from each pair also had access to an online educational service and the Internet.

After two months, outside educators were asked to evaluate the students' projects. They rated the projects from students with online access as better at synthesizing different points of view, stating an issue, presenting a full picture, and presenting information and ideas (Trotter, 1996). The projects of students with online access were also judged more complete than those completed by students without online access.

Despite such positive findings, many believe the Internet is an environment from which children must be protected (Clyde, 1997). Many popular publications tout the dangers of the Internet, highlighting such topics as pornography and the Internet, lending support to proponents of this belief.

To help address the concerns of those on both sides of the issue, an Internet Summit was held in Washington, DC, on December 1-3, 1997, called "Internet Online Summit: Focus on Children." The goal of the Summit was to bring together public interest groups, the computer and communications industry, government, and citizens to address ways to help ensure that the Internet online experience is safe, educational, and entertaining for children. It highlighted the current technological, legal, and educational options, and challenges, to ensuring that children can enjoy a safe and educational online experience in a way that is consistent with the open, decentralized nature of the Internet and the U.S. First Amendment ("Summit Background," 1997).

This Summit emerged out of a commitment made during a public meeting with President Clinton and Vice President Gore on July 16, 1997, in the wake of the Supreme Court decision overturning the Communications Decency Act (CDA) in June of 1997. The CDA, though intended to protect children from inappropriate material on the Internet, was declared unconstitutional on the grounds that broadcast style content regulations, when applied to the Internet, violate constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.

In a continued effort to address the safety of the Internet for children, many groups made a variety of announcements at the Summit. These announcements included the following individual, law enforcement, and public education initiatives ("Participants in Internet/Online," 1997; "Internet Online Summit," 1997).

Individual Initiatives

- The American Library Association has developed a new collection of links to more than 700 sites for kids that are reviewed, evaluated, annotated, and organized in categories by a team of children's librarians.
- America Online introduced new features that improve parental controls and encourage their use by (1) creating a new level of control appropriate for 13- to 15-year-olds, (2) adding a permanent parental control button to the AOL welcome screen, (3) making the choice of whether to use parental controls an automatic part of registering a new screen name, and (4) launching an AOL neighborhood watch area and online campaign to provide information on safety and security and raise awareness of safe online behavior.
- The Children's Partnership will disseminate a new information resource for families entitled "Keeping Kids Safe Online—Tips and Tools for Parents." The brochure will provide parents with information about the benefits and risks of online communications and media as well as specific parenting tips for using email, the World Wide Web, and chat rooms.
- Disney On-Line has designed an email program for children that incorporates parental controls that must be designated during registration and can be tailored to individual children. They also plan to release a family-oriented search and directory tool pointing families to thousands of kid-appropriate sites. In addition, they announced a new public education program, CyberNetiquette, which provides families with interactive ways to learn lessons in online safety.
- The Family Education Company will be conducting a survey to learn how families use the Internet, how families feel about the safety of children in cyberspace, and other issues affecting families in the new medium. The company, in conjunction with its partners, will use thousands of local Web sites to conduct a dialogue on issues surrounding families and the Internet, and they will use the Web sites to share resource lists of family-friendly Internet sites and services.
- A series of "smart surfing workshops" will be offered in five cities next year by MCI to provide training to parents and children on avoiding and dealing with what is bad online as well as finding and benefiting from what is good. Families will be taught the basics of Internet use, how to monitor their children's use of the Internet, how to use filtering software, and how to encourage family-friendly Internet navigation.

Law Enforcement and Public Education Initiatives

- Vice President Al Gore announced a national public education campaign, "America Links Up: An Internet Teach-In," designed to help Americans understand how to guide kids online. The campaign, using the slogan "Think, then Link," will encourage the active involvement of parents, teachers, librarians, and others in guiding children, increasing awareness of safe online behavior, and encouraging familiarity with tools that promote safety and access to good content. The goal of the program is to educate and empower children to make wise and responsible decisions in cyberspace. In preparation for the teach-ins, a series of public service announcements (PSAs) will begin running this spring to get parents information that will be useful during summer vacation. The PSAs will provide parents with an 800 number and Web site address to obtain more detailed information.

- Beginning early next year, parents and consumers will be able to notify authorities of incidents of child pornography and child predation in cyberspace through a CyberTipLine, to be operated with joint industry and U.S. government support by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. The CyberTipLine, which will serve as a clearinghouse for tips and leads on cybercrime, will be accessible through both a Web site and an 800 number (800-843-5678).

"This Summit is the first step toward addressing a full range of issues of concern to parents, such as advertising and marketing on-line, privacy, the development of high quality content and equitable access," said Christine Varney, the Chairperson of the Summit. "We are committed to holding future meetings and are encouraged by the success we have had in working together so far" ("Internet/Online Summit," 1997).

Additional Resources

Parents Guide to the Internet

Child Safety Online

Sources

Clyde, Anne. (1997). Censorship or protection? Children and access to the Internet. *Emergency Librarian, 24*(3), 48-50.

Internet/Online Summit highlights cooperation and action to enhance the safety and benefits of cyberspace for children and families. (1997, December 2). [Online]. Available: http://www.kidsonline.org/news/advisory_971202a.html [1997, December 2].

Participants in Internet/Online Summit announce individual initiatives to help children and families. (1997, December 1). [Online]. Available: http://www.kidsonline.org/news/advisory_971201.html [1997, December 2].

Summit background. (1997). [Online]. Available: http://www.kidsonline.org/background/ [1997, December 2].

Trotter, Andrew. (1996, October 23). On-line access appears to benefit student projects, study finds. *Education Week,* p. 11.

Prepared for *Parent News* by Dawn Ramsburg.

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Parent News for January 1998

Community Spotlight

Welcoming Babies with Down Syndrome

by Pam Wilson

Our guest author for this month's Community Spotlight is a parent of two children. Her teenage son has Down Syndrome (DS) and juvenile diabetes. She feels especially fortunate that she received valuable information and support at the time her son was born because her obstetrician was also raising a son with DS. She hopes that this article and the resources provided will be helpful for other parents who may be facing the same experiences.

If you are welcoming a new baby with Down Syndrome into your family, you probably have many questions and concerns, as do your extended family, friends, and neighbors. I have written this information keeping in mind my own diverse experiences when my children were born with DS.

Congratulations on the birth of your baby. We wish you all the best.

Down Syndrome is a chromosomal anomaly that occurs in 1.3 per 1,000 births. For some unexplained reason, an error in cell development results in 47 chromosomes rather than the usual 46. The extra gene material slightly changes the orderly development of the body and brain. About 5,000 babies with DS are born in the United States every year. The national population of individuals with DS is estimated to be 250,000. About 80% of babies with DS are born to mothers under the age of 35, and about 1 in 400 babies born to women over 35 have DS.

People with Down Syndrome are more like typically developing individuals than they are different. There is great diversity within the population in terms of personality, learning styles, intelligence, appearance, compliance, humor, compassion, congeniality, and attitude. Favorite pastimes vary from person to person and range from reading and gardening to baseball and music, and beyond.

Children with Down Syndrome look more like their families than they do one another, have a full complement of emotions and attitudes, are creative and imaginative in play and pranks, and grow up to live independent lives with varying degrees of support and accommodations needed. DS will not be the most interesting thing about your son or daughter as they grow up. Remember that raising any child fills your life with unimaginable delight and difficulties. We can no longer predict how far our children will go.

Children with Down Syndrome benefit from the same care, attention, and inclusion in community life that help every child grow. As with all children, high-quality education in neighborhood schools and preschools or at home is important to provide the child with the opportunities that are needed to develop strong academic skills.

On standard IQ tests, our sons and daughters with Down Syndrome most often score in the mild to moderate range of mental retardation. However, these tests do not measure many important areas of intelligence, and you will often be surprised by the memory, insight, creativity, and cleverness of your child. The high rate of learning disabilities in students with DS sometimes masks a range of abilities and talents.

Individuals with Down Syndrome may be identified by numerous physical attributes that may or may not present themselves in any one individual. Some characteristics are the beautiful almond shaped eyes, with striking Brushfield spots on the irises, a single palmar crease on one or both hands, small features, and exceptional social intelligence. Individuals with DS have a high rate of congenital heart defects (35 to 50%) and should have an echocardiogram within the first two months of life. National organizations provide medical checklists for individuals with DS that you may wish to pass on to your child's physician.

There are three major types of Down Syndrome. Your baby is most likely to have Trisomy 21, meaning presence of extra genetic material on the 21st pair of chromosomes resulting from an anomaly in cell division during development of the egg or sperm or during fertilization. About 95% of people with DS have Trisomy 21. About 4% have Translocation, where the extra chromosome 21 broke off and became attached to another chromosome. About 1% have Mosaicism, where only some cells have Trisomy 21.

Your child will have more opportunities than a child born with Down Syndrome five years ago. As young people with DS show what they can do with the support of their communities, and as they integrate mainstream programs, more doors open for others.

We have seen a TV series starring a talented actor and actress with DS enlighten the general public about the potential of all our children. Two young men have authored a book, *Count Us In, Growing Up with Down Syndrome*, and impressed audiences across the country at book signings and on talk shows. A fast-paced mystery, *Honor Thy Son*, by Lou Shaw, features two characters with DS who are faithfully portrayed as multidimensional young adults. A young man with DS is the winner of the 1996 Best Actor award. Across the country, people with DS are quietly going on with their lives without fame or fanfare and transforming their communities by just being there. They have dreams and the determination to reach their goals. They learn in regular classrooms in their neighborhood schools with the children who will one day be their co-workers, neighbors, and adult friends. Young adults hold diverse and meaningful jobs, maintain their own households, and make significant contributions to their communities every day.

Allow your family, friends, and neighbors time to learn about Down Syndrome, reminding them if necessary that DS is just a small part of who your child is and will become. Staying integrated in your community is important to your child's development and your peace of mind.

Try to get some rest. You are allowed to feel however you feel, and so are others who love you and your baby. Childbirth is hard work; many of your emotions stem from a new life coming into your family. You deserve congratulations and wonderful gifts. Have the good cooks among your family and friends bring over their best meals. Take time to welcome and enjoy your baby—babies grow up fast.

These national organizations will send information about Down Syndrome to you and other family members. They have yearly conferences, newsletters, and lists of local parent groups that you may wish to contact for local resources and information. In the United States, contact:

The National Down Syndrome Congress
Telephone: 800-232-6372

The National Down Syndrome Society
Telephone: 800-221-4602

For information on Mosaic DS, contact:

Dr. Colleen Jackson-Cook
Department of Human Genetics
Virginia Commonwealth University
P.O. Box 980033
Richmond, VA 23298-0033
Telephone: 804-828-9632
Fax: 804-828-3760
Email: JACKSON@GEMS.VCU.EDU

For more information, resources, and support, you may wish to consult the following resources:

Publications and Tapes

Disability Solutions. A free newsletter about Down Syndrome available in print as well as online.
URL: http://www.teleport.com/~dsolns/
Email: dsolns@teleport.com

Your Baby Has Down Syndrome video. $15 per video plus $3.00 shipping /handling.
Down Syndrome Center
Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh
3705 Fifth Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Telephone: 412-692-7963
Fax: 412-692-7428
Email: cannons@chplink.chp.edu

Babies with Down Syndrome, A New Parents' Guide, edited by Karen Stray-Gundersen
Woodbine House. ISBN 0-933149-64-6.

Understanding Down Syndrome: An Introduction for Parents, by Cliff Cunningham. American Edition. 1996. ISBN 1-57129-009-5.
Brookline Books
Telephone: 800-666-2665
Email: BROOKLINEBKS@delphi.com

Communication Skills in Children with Down Syndrome: A Guide for Parents, by Libby Kumin. ISBN 0-933149-53-0.
Woodbine House
Telephone: 800-843-7323

Communicating Together Newsletter, edited by Libby Kumin.
Telephone: 410-995-0722
Fax: 410-997-8735

Before the First Word, by Libby Kumin. Audiotape from the 1995 NDSC convention: $7 per tape plus $4 s/h.
Professional Sound Images
Telephone: 800-808-8273

Teaching Reading to Children with Down Syndrome, A Guide for Parents and Teachers, by Patricia Logan Oelwein. ISBN 0-933149-55-7.

Down Syndrome Quarterly Newsletter, edited by Samuel J Thios, PhD. Subscriptions: $24/year (4 issues).
Telephone: 614-587-6338
Fax: 614-587-6417
URL: http://www.denison.edu/dsq/
Email: thios@denison.edu

Count Us In, by Jason Kingsley and Mitchell Levitz. 1994. Harcourt Brace. ISBN 0-15-622660-x.

Hope for the Families: New Directions for Parents, by Robert Perske; illustrated by Martha Perske. Abingdon Press. ISBN 0-687-17380.

Down Syndrome: Living and Learning in the Community, edited by Lynn Nadel and Donna Rosenthal; NDSS; Proceedings of the Fifth International DS Conference held in Orlando, FL, in 1993; copyright 1995 by Wiley-Lisss Inc. ISBN 0-471-02201.

Teaching Strategies for Children with Down Syndrome: A Resource Guide (K-6), edited by B. Tien and C. Hall. Jointly prepared by the PREP Program and the Ups & Downs Association of Calgary, Alberta. Calgary Down Syndrome Association.

Teaching the Child with Down Syndrome: A Guide for Parents and Professionals, by M.J. Hanson. Pro-Ed. ISBN 0-89079-103-1.

The Language of Toys: Teaching Communication Skills to Special-Needs Children. A Guide for Parents and Teachers, by Sue Schwartz and Joen E. Heller Miller. 1988. Woodbine House.

It Takes Two to Talk: A Parent's Guide to Helping Children Communicate, by A. Manolson. 1992. The Hanen Program.

Medical and Surgical Care for Children with Down Syndrome, A Guide for Parents, edited by D.C. Van Dyke and P. Mattheis. Woodbine House. ISBN 0-933149-54-9.

Medical Care in Down Syndrome: A Preventative Medicine Approach, by P.T. Rogers and Mary Coleman. Marcel Dekker, Inc. ISBN 0-8247-8648-X.

Biomedical Concerns in Persons with Down Syndrome, by S.M. Pueschel and J.K. Pueschel. Paul Brookes Publishing Co. ISBN 1-55766-089-1.

Advances in Down Syndrome, edited by Valentine Dmitriev and Patricia Oelwein. Special Child Publications. ISBN 0-87562-092-2.

The Psychobiology of Down Syndrome, edited by Lynn Nadel. MIT Press. ISBN 0-262-14043-8.

San Francisco Bay Area Down Syndrome page
URL: http://ptolemy.eecs.berkeley.edu/~pino/DS/

Inclusion Press International Home Page
URL: http://www.inclusion.com

Institute on Community Integration -- University of Minnesota
URL: http://www.ici.coled.umn.edu/ici/

TASH: Working in Partnership with Disability Advocates Worldwide
URL: http://www.tash.org/

The Alliance for Technology Access
URL: http://www.ataccess.org

Center for Studies on Inclusive Education -- United Kingdom
URL: http://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/csie/csiehome.htm

Family Village School Inclusive Education Resources
URL: http://laran.waisman.wisc.edu/fv/www/education/inclusion.html

Agassiz Elementary School -- Chicago, Illinois
Inclusion Digest
URL: http://members.aol.com/AInclusion/index.html

Down Syndrome Educational Trust (DownsEd) -- United Kingdom
URL: http://www.downsnet.org/downsed/

Dolls with Down Syndrome -- *USA*
URL: http://www.dollsbyjerri.com/dolls.htm
Dolls with Down Syndrome -- *Germany*
URL: http://uni-bremen.de/~downsyn/down23e.html

Online Discussion List

Down-Syn listserv. To subscribe, send an email message to LISTSERV@LISTSERV.NODAK.EDU with no subject in the subject line and the message "subscribe down-syn <your first and last name>." Respond OK to the confirmation message.

Special thanks to Dr. Len Leshin and Liz Steele for suggestions of book titles.

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The Development of Language and Reading Skills in Children with Down Syndrome, by Susan Buckley. 1986. Portsmouth Polytechnic.

Internet Resources

The Sibling Support Project
URL: http://www.chmc.org/departmt/sibsupp/
Email: dmeyer@chmc.org

National Down Syndrome Congress
URL: http://members.carol.net/~ndsc/
Email: NDSC@charitiesusa.com

The National Down Syndrome Society
URL: http://www.ndss.org/
Email: info@ndss.org

National Association for Down Syndrome (NADS)
URL: http://www.nads.org/

What's Up with Down Syndrome
URL: http://idt.net/~kehler/What'sUp.html

Down Syndrome Quarterly
URL: http://www.denison.edu/dsq/

- Includes the newly updated *Health Care Guidelines for Individuals with Down Syndrome*
  (DS Preventive Medical Check List)
  URL: http://www.denison.edu/dsq/health96.html

Down Syndrome Health Issues
URL: http://www.davlin.net/users/lleshin/

Down Syn On-Line Magazine
URL: http://www.epix.net/~mcross/down-syn.html

Down Syndrome associations in Western Australia
URL: http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/downs/
Email: gothard@socs.murdoch.edu.au
Email: dsawa@upnaway.com

Down Syndrome Home Page
URL: http://www.nas.com/downsyn/

Welcoming Babies with Down Syndrome
URL: http://www.nas.com/downsyn/welcome.html
Also available in:
Spanish: Bienvenidos Bebes con Sindrome de Down
URL: http://www.nas.com/downsyn/wbsp.html

French: Accueillir les bebe trisomiques
URL: http://www.nas.com/downsyn/frwds.html
Japanese:
URL: http://infofarm.cc.affrc.go.jp/~momotani/welbaby.html

Down Syndrome Information for the United Kingdom
URL: http://ep.open.ac.uk/wgma/Chris/UKDSinfo.html

What's Up with Down's -- Home Page of a teenage boy with Down Syndrome
URL: http://members.aol.com/karenl2888/dan.html

Down Syndrome Health Issues
URL: http://www.davlin.net/users/lleshin/

Down Syndrome: Teaching Reading and Language
URL: http://www.concentric.net/~Lovlearn/

Australian breastfeeding tips page
URL: http://avoca.vicnet.net.au/~nmaa/downsynd.html
(Editorial Note: As of 7/3/98, the address for the Australian Breastfeeding Tips Page has changed. Visit the new address at: http://avoca.vicnet.net.au/~nmaa/bfinfo/down.html**).**

Breastfeeding Advocacy Web page
URL: http://www.clark.net/pub/activist/bfpage/bfpage.html

Family Village Project
URL: http://www.familyvillage.wisc.edu:8000/lib_down.htm

Thoughts from the Middle of the Night
URL: http://rdz.stjohns.edu/lists/our-kids/Archives/TFtMotN.html

Children with Diabetes Web page (DS)
URL: http://www.castleweb.com/diabetes/d_03_193.htm

Dusty Dutton--Home Page of a young woman with Down Syndrome
URL: http://www.microweb.com/ddutton/dustyd.html

Down Syndrome Association of Metropolitan Toronto
URL: http://www.dsamt.toronto.on.ca/

OurKids Web Archive: former postings of the Our-Kids listserv (diverse diagnoses)
URL: http://maelstrom.stjohns.edu/archives/our-kids.html

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) Web site:
URL: http://www.nichcy.org/

PREP Resource Center (Calgary, Alberta, Canada)
URL: http://www.cadvision.com/prepprog/
Email: winklerj@cadvision.com

Parent News for January 1998

Of Interest

National Center for Education Statistics Releases New Report on Father Involvement

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Historically, when researchers have studied issues related to parenting, they have primarily considered mothers when designing their questions of interest. This pattern is evidenced in studies on the effect on children when mothers work or when they stay home, or the special challenges of being a teenage single mother (Forgione, 1997). Much less attention has been paid to fathers. When researchers and analysts have focused on fathers, they have often concentrated on one set of fathers: nonresident fathers. Such research has mainly explored these fathers' payment or lack of payment of child support and the extent to which they see their children. Moreover, in terms of one of the critical issues involving parents and children—the parent's role in their children's education, very little is known about fathers' involvement with their children's schools or whether fathers' involvement actually influences their children's learning.

To address this lack of information, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has released a new report, *Fathers' Involvement in Their Children's Schools*. Data for this study come from interviews with parents and guardians of almost 17,000 kindergartners through 12th-graders. The information was gathered as part of the National Household Education Survey between January and April 1996.

Previous research has shown that parents' involvement in schools is a strong indicator of children's academic success at school. This study is one of the first to examine the individual contributions of mothers and fathers to their children's education. The goal was to learn how much fathers are involved in their children's education and whether their influence mattered in their children's academic success. Low involvement was defined as participation in no activities or no more than one activity at school over the course of a year, moderate as participation in two activities, and high involvement as participation in three or four activities. The activities include attending a regular school meeting, a parent-teacher conference, a class meeting or event, or volunteering.

The findings from this study show that fathers of more than half of the kindergarten through high-school-age children in the United States participate at their children's school at a moderate or high level (Forgione, 1997). While such involvement of fathers in school in two-parent families is much less frequent than that of mothers (52% vs. 79%), it is far from uncommon. What is particularly interesting is that when fathers have sole responsibility for raising children, they are almost as likely to be highly involved in school activities (46%) as mothers in either two-parent or single-parent families (56% and 49%, respectively). In fact, the study's findings indicate that the involvement of single parents (fathers or mothers) in their children's schools approximates that of mothers in two-parent families.

Those fathers who are more actively involved in their children's schools share a number of other characteristics as well that research suggests are related to better outcomes for their children. For example, they are more likely than low-involvement fathers to have visited a library, museum, or historical site with their children, and they are more likely to have high educational expectations for their children.

How is the involvement of parents at school related to student success? The study used a number of school outcome indicators including earning mostly A's in school and grade repetition. Overall, children are most likely to be successful when both parents have high involvement in their children's school, and they are far less likely to succeed when there is low involvement. These relationships were found even after other factors that might influence children's success, such as race and ethnicity, parents' education, and family income, were statistically controlled.

With respect to fathers in particular, the results show that children are more likely to get mostly A's if their fathers are involved in their schools. This finding is true in two-parent families even after controlling for the involvement of the children's mothers and other factors. In single-father families, children are twice as likely to get mostly A's if their fathers are highly involved in school.

The report also presents some detailed findings on the activities of nonresident fathers in their children's schools. School-aged children in 1996 were more likely to have at least some contact with their fathers who were not residing at home than were children 15 years ago. While these fathers are much less involved in their children's school than custodial fathers (only 31% of them participated at all in any school activity), when they are involved, they make a positive difference, particularly for older children (those in the 6th grade and beyond). Again, these children are more likely to get mostly A's if their fathers are very involved at school. They are also less likely to repeat a grade.

In sum, this survey finds that children do better in school when their fathers are involved in their schools, regardless of whether their fathers live with them and whether their mothers are also involved. It shows that single fathers and single mothers have high levels of involvement in their children's schools, almost as much as mothers in two-parent families. And when the level of school involvement by both parents is low, no matter what the makeup of the family, this study suggests that the chances of student success in school are dramatically reduced.

Sources

Forgione, Pascal. (1997). *Fathers' involvement in their children's schools: Commissioner's Statement* [Online]. Available: http://nces.ed.gov/Pressrelease/releas04.html [1997, September].

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Prepared for *Parent News* by Dawn Ramsburg.

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Parent News for January 1998

Of Interest

"21st Century Community Learning Centers" Program Announced

Hundreds of new after-school centers in rural and urban schools across the United States will be supported under a program announced by Vice President Gore and Secretary of Education Riley.

The program, "21st Century Community Learning Centers," received $40 million in the 1998 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill (signed into law last month), a major increase over the 1997 appropriation of $1 million. A "notice inviting applications" for the program appeared in the December 2 *Federal Register*.

The notice tells that, under the program, grants will be awarded to rural and inner-city public elementary or secondary schools—or to consortia of those schools or local education agencies applying on their behalf—for planning, implementing, or expanding after-school projects. Only applications that include significantly expanded learning opportunities for children and youth, and that contribute to reduced drug use and violence, will be funded.

Partnerships with community-based organizations and consortia of schools are encouraged to apply. The Department expects to award 200 to 300 grants for up to 3 years, averaging $100,000 per center (ranging from $35,000 to $200,000). The application deadline is March 9, 1998.

Applications will be available on the Department of Education Web site on December 16.

For more information, please see the excerpts from the *Federal Register* notice below. These excerpts provide the purpose, title of priority (if given), eligible applicants, availability and closing dates, available funds, and the estimated size and number of awards for this program. An online version of the *Federal Register* notice may be found at: http://ocfo.ed.gov/gophroot/4fedreg/1grantann/q497/120297e.txt

Please note that the *Federal Register* notice should be consulted for complete and authoritative information. A press release announcing the program is at: http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/12-1997/commlr.html

Also available is a Department of Education report, "Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers" (July 1997): http://www.ed.gov/pubs/LearnCenters/

21st Century Community Learning Centers Program [*Federal Register*: December 2, 1997 (CFDA No. 84.287)] [OERI]

Purpose of Program: The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program was established by Congress to award grants to rural and inner-city public schools, or consortia of such schools, to enable them to plan, implement, or expand projects that benefit the educational, health, social services, cultural, and recreational needs of the community. School-based community learning centers can provide a safe, drug-free, supervised, and cost-effective after-school, weekend, or summer haven for children, youth and their families.

Eligible Applicants: Only rural or inner-city public elementary or secondary schools, consortia of those schools, or LEAs applying on their behalf, are eligible to receive a grant under the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program. An LEA with many interested schools is encouraged to submit a consortium application on their behalf. Applicants must demonstrate that they meet the statutory program purpose as being either a "rural" or "inner-city" school or a consortium of those schools.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: March 9, 1998
Applications Available: December 16, 1997
Available Funds: $40 million
Estimated Range of Awards: $35,000 - $200,000 per Center.
Awards to consortia or LEAs involving multiple Centers will be adjusted to reflect the number of Centers included.
Estimated Average Size of Awards: $100,000 (per Center)
Estimated Number of Awards: 200-300, depending on how many awards will assist multiple Centers.
Additional Information: Information including selection criteria and priorities for this program are available in the *Federal Register* notice. To obtain an Application Package: Written requests should be mailed to: Amanda Clyburn, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 555 New Jersey Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20208-5644, Attn: 21st Century Center Learning Centers. Requests may also be faxed to Amanda at 202-219-2198.

Past EDInfo messages: http://www.ed.gov/MailingLists/EDInfo/

Search: http://www.ed.gov/MailingLists/EDInfo/search.html

Past ED Initiatives: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/EDInitiatives/

For more information:

Cindy Balmuth, Peter Kickbush, and Kirk Winters
U.S. Department of Education
Email: peter_kickbush@ed.gov

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Of Interest

If a Child Threatens to Run Away, Should Parents be Concerned?

by Anne Robertson

Each year, an estimated 1 million children, usually between the ages of 13 and 17, run away from home (Isaacs, 1997, p. 121). The National Runaway Switchboard estimates that the average age has dropped from 16 years to 15 years, with 38% under the age of 14. While many children think about running away or may threaten to run away at some point during their childhood, for most children it never goes beyond a threat. Increasingly, younger runaways appear to be from well-meaning families, and parents are taken by surprise at their child's actions. However, 41% of the runaways who called the National Runaway Switchboard in 1997 indicated that "family dynamics" was the main reason for running (Isaacs, 1997, p. 121). Other concerns may be abuse, poor grades, social issues, and stress from conflicts at home or at school. Also, the breakdown in extended communities may be a factor. In previous generations, when family tensions flared, the parents and adolescent might get some respite care from a grandparent or relative who lived in the neighborhood. It wasn't unusual for the teen to stay with grandmother for awhile. Unfortunately, few families today have those options available within their community.

It may be helpful for parents to understand some of the warning signs that may appear in a preadolescent or adolescent who is considering running away. Fenwick and Smith (1996) in *Adolescence: The Survival Guide* list the three main causes for running away:

- Frequent family fights. Some of the most common issues are about the teen's behavior, grades, friends, clothes, or staying out late.
- Worries that the child is afraid to tell you. Troubles at school—including bullying, suspension or poor grades, anxiousness about peer issues, sexual orientation or pregnancy, and alcohol or drug problems—are not unusual concerns for students.
- Situations at home where the child feels unable to cope. Running away is usually a cry for help and may be the child's way of escaping abuse, a stepparent, or dealing with the breakup of the parents' marriage. These problems may be the most difficult for the parent to deal with because the parent may not acknowledge the seriousness of the situation.

Transition times, such as moving to a new community or school, are high-risk times for students, and they may fantasize about their previous community or have romantic ideas about life on the streets. Other warning signs might include increased tension and decreased communication between the parent and child or the teen's withdrawal. These and other indicators of depression should be noted in the child.

For some parents, the first realization that there is a problem is when the adolescent runs away; for others, the child may threaten in anger to leave. According to Fenwick and Smith (1996), the typical runaway will likely not stay away for long, typically 48 hours to 14 days. Also, very few leave their immediate community; they will usually stay with friends. Most runaways come home of their own accord. However, it is important that a threat to run away is not ignored. Parents might respond to the child by listening to the child's concern and helping the child develop some strategies to cope with the problem. It may also be helpful to suggest talking with an empathetic third party such as a family friend, relative, or counselor. Reassuring the child that he is loved, and able to work through his concerns rather than running away, may help. If the child does leave, Fenwick and Smith (1996) suggest the following actions:

- Check with friends and relatives who are close to the child.
- If you are unable to contact your child, call the local police.
- When your child does come home, you may react with relief and then anger. However, let your children know that you are upset because you love them and are worried about their safety.
- Make them feel it was worth coming home by listening and trying to understand their concerns, then seeing what can be done to change things.
- Don't be afraid to seek outside help from people who are not directly involved if it is easier for the child to talk to them.

Working together to build communication and to improve the quality of the relationship between the parent and teen may be the most effective prevention for running away.

For more information:

Boys Town National Hotline
Telephone: 800-448-3000
URL: http://www.ffbh.boystown.org/Hotline/hotline.html

National Runaway Switchboard
Telephone: 800-621-4000
URL: http://www.babyplace.com/runaway.htm

Covenant House Nineline
Telephone: 800-999-9999
URL: http://www.covenanthouse.org/

Youth Crisis Hotline
Telephone: 800-448-4663

Books:

Rebel without a Car: Surviving and Appreciating Your Child's Teen Years by Fred Mednick (Minneapolis, MN: Fairview Press, 1996).

Helping Teenagers into Adulthood by George R. Holmes (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1995).

Adolescence: The Survival Guide for Parents and Teenagers by Elizabeth Fenwick and Tony Smith (New York: DK Publishing, 1996).

You and Your Adolescent by Laurence Steinberg and Ann Levine (New York: HarperCollins, 1997).

Raising Responsible Teenagers by Bob Myers (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1996).

Sources

Fenwick, E., & Smith, T. (1996). *Adolescence: The survival guide for parents and teenagers.* New York: DK Publishing.

Isaacs, Florence. (1997, September). Mean streets: What makes good kids runaway from home? *Parents*, pp. 121-122.

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Of Interest

"Parents Guide to the Internet" Released

The publication of "Parents Guide to the Internet" was announced recently by Vice President Gore at the Internet Online Summit: Focus on Children in Washington, DC. The 16-page booklet gives parents an introduction to the Internet and "is intended," notes Secretary of Education Riley, "to help parents—regardless of their level of technological know-how—make use of the on-line world as an important educational tool." It can help answer questions such as:

- What can families without Internet access do to get access?
- What should families consider when buying a computer or selecting an Internet service provider?
- What are some tips for ensuring that children have safe, productive, and enjoyable experiences on the Internet?

A glossary of Internet terms is included in the guide, which was produced by the Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement and Office of Educational Technology in collaboration with leaders from parent and education organizations, the private sector, nonprofit organizations, and others. The full text is at: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/internet/. Single paper copies are available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN.

Below is an excerpt that features Internet sites for parents and children.

Note: The Internet Online Summit has been held "to bring together public interest groups, the computer and communications industries, government, and citizens to address ways to help ensure that the Internet online experience is safe, educational, and entertaining for children." For information on the summit—including how to listen to the proceedings, which are being broadcast live using RealAudio—please see:

http://www.kidsonline.org/

Sites Along the Way

From "Parents Guide to the Internet"
U.S. Department of Education, November 1997

This section offers a sampling of some Internet sites waiting for you and your children. (Addresses are current as of November 1997 but may change at any time. If an address does not work, use the search feature on your Web browser to enter the site name and get the updated link).

Family-Friendly Places

- **The Franklin Institute Science Museum** http://sln.fi.edu/ offers online exhibits on an array of science and technology topics.
- Find good books to read, including Newbery and Caldecott Award Winners, at the **American Library Association** site http://www.ala.org/parents/index.html. This site includes information about authors, KidsConnect (for help locating all the information online), and educational games.
- Watch Live from Mars, audio and video transmissions of the Pathfinder's explorations, at **NASA's Quest Project** site http://quest.arc.nasa.gov/. Find more adventures in space, including views from the Hubble Space Telescope, at a different NASA site http://spacelink.nasa.gov/.index.html.
- Climb Mt. Everest, explore inside the Pyramids, and go on other electronic field trips with the **Public Broadcasting System** at http://www.pbs.org/. Preschool children can enjoy children's programming here, elementary school children can practice story telling, and teenagers and adults can take telecourses.
- Join an interactive exploration of the oceans, on earth and beyond, with the **Jason Project** http://www.jasonproject.org/.
- Puzzle over optical illusions, take memory tests, and conduct experiments, online and off, at the **Exploratorium** http://www.exploratorium.edu/.
- Enjoy materials from the **Library of Congress** http://www.loc.gov/, including exhibits on topics ranging from ballet to Jelly Roll Morton, Native American flutes to Thomas Jefferson's pasta machine.
- Read stories with your children, let them add to the stories told around the Global Campfire, and find links to other good family sites at **Parents and Children Together Online** http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/fl/pcto/menu.html.
- Get educational resources through distance learning from **Healthlinks** http://www.mcet.edu/healthlinks/index.html.
- Find information on blocking software from **Netparents** at http://www.netparents.org/.
- Try the **Air Force's** new family-friendly site for kids at http://www.af.mil/aflinkjr/.

Megasites (extensive links)

- **50+ Great Sites for Kids & Parents**, from the American Library Association (ALA) enables preschool through elementary school children to explore rainbows, black history, castles for kids, award-winning news reported by children for children, the Kids Web Page Hall of Fame, to say nothing of watching dolphins, learning lullabies, and much more http://www.ala.org/parentspage/greatsites/50.html.
- **The Internet Kids & Family Yellow Pages Hotlists** invites viewers to make their own home page, visit the Kremlin, look inside the human heart, take Socks' special VIP tour of the White House, and make a boat trip around the world http://www.netmom.com/ikyp/samples/hotlist.htm.
- **Berit's Best Sites for Children** helps you learn about earthquakes, visit the imagination factory and make junk mail jewelry, descend into a volcano, tour a human cell, go on a world "surfari," solve a crime, and fly a kite http://db.cochran.com/li_toc:theoPage.db.
- **Steve Savitzky's Interesting Places for Kids** is an award-winning site in its own right with many unusual links http://www.starport.com/places/forKids/.

Online Reference Material

- **The American Academy of Pediatrics'** http://www.aap.org/ has a wide variety of information for parents concerning their children's health and well-being; covering topics such as immunizations, sleep problems, newborn care, and television.

- The **National Urban League** http://www.nul.org/ is a useful resource for tracking programs and events related to African-American issues. It is a rich reference area for students, parents, teachers and history buffs.
- **AskERIC**, a free question-answering service provided by the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), invites people to submit their questions about education, parenting, and child development to askeric@askeric.org for an e-mail response within 2 working days.
- **B.J. Pinchbeck's Homework Helper** is a wonderful guide to encyclopedias, dictionaries, reference works, and other resources on a great variety of subjects http://tristate.pgh.net/~pinch13/. The enthusiasm of its 10-year-old creator adds appeal to everything from the Ultimate White Pages to Bugs in the News.
- **My Virtual Reference Desk** http://www.refdesk.com/ offers dozens of links—to dictionaries, encyclopedias, reference/research materials, thesauruses, atlases, sports, entertainment, and much more—as well as a search engine for locating more information.
- **The Internet Public Library: Reference Center** http://www.ipl.org/ref/provides an "ask a question" feature and a teen collection, as well as sections on reference, arts and humanities, science and technology, and education.

Sites for Parents and Parent Groups

- **The Children's Partnership** http://www.childrenspartnership.org/ offers, for free, the full text of its useful guide, **The Parents' Guide to the Information Superhighway: Rules and Tools for Families Online**, prepared with the National PTA and the National Urban League. A printed version of the guide, which provides common-sense guidance and encouragement for parents and tips and computer activities for children, is available for $8 from The Children's Partnership, 1351 Third Street Promenade, Suite 206, Santa Monica, CA 90401-1321; 310-260-1220.
- **The National Parent Information Network** http://npin.org/ cosponsored by the ERIC Clearinghouses on Elementary and Early Childhood Education and Urban Education, includes extensive articles on parenting, listservs, and links to more than 100 sites on education, health and safety, family issues and interests, and parenting and development of children from infancy to adolescence.
- At the **National PTA** site http://www.pta.org/ learn about PTA education programs and participate in a discussion group, chat room, or bulletin board. The site also includes links to sites of many organizations concerned with children.
- **The Family Education Network** http://familyeducation.com/ offers hundreds of brief articles on parenting, links to local sites, and discussion boards that connect parents with online experts.
- **The Partnership for Family Involvement in Education** http://www.ed.gov/PFIE/ sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, highlights school-community- business partnerships and includes a calendar of events. At the home page for the Department of Education http://www.ed.gov/, parents will find information about the President's education initiatives, college financial aid, and parenting publications, along with links to other useful education sites.
- **The National Coalition for Parental Involvement in Education** http://www.ncpie.org/ provides a catalog of resources available from all its member organizations.
- **The National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents** 202-547-9286 helps economically disadvantaged parents develop skills to enhance the quality of their children's education.
- **Parent Soup** http://www.parentsoup.com/ includes an archive of answers to questions asked of pediatricians and child development experts and advice about helping your children succeed in school.

- **The Parents at Home** site http://advicom.net/~jsm/moms/, especially for at-home parents, offers e-mail pen pals, a booklist, and links to children's sites.
- **Magellan** http://www.mckinley.com/magellan/ uses a rating scale to evaluate parenting sites. To look at the ratings or follow the links, select Reviews, Life & Style, Family, and Parenting.
- **The ASPIRA Association, Inc.** http://www.aspira.org/ highlights its two national parent involvement programs—ASPIRA Parents for Educational Excellence Program (APEX) and Teachers, Organizations, and Parents for Students Program (TOPS). Each program provides a Spanish/English curriculum that strives to empower Latino parents and families.
- **The White House** web site http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/New/Ratings/describes a strategy to involve government, industry, parent, and teachers in putting together a rating system so parents can define material they consider offensive and protect their children effectively.

For more information:

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Of Interest

Children's Books

The ERIC system offers documents called "Information Guides" on a broad range of topics related to education. Of relevance to children's literature is an ERIC Info Guide called "Children's Literature" written by Sue A. Clary in 1994 (updated on November 15, 1995, by Twana Weiler). This online info guide contains links to many Web sites about children's literature. It is available online at:

http://ericir.syr.edu/Virtual/InfoGuides/Alphabetical_List_of_InfoGuides/Childrens_Lit-11.95.html

Below is a list of children's books related to the following topics: Fathers and Down Syndrome.

Fathers

Always My Dad by Sharon Dennis Wyeth and Raul Colon (Published in 1997 by Dragonfly). Ages 4-8.

Dad and Me in the Morning by Patricia Lakin, illustrated by Robert G. Steele (Published in 1994 by Concept Books). Ages 4-8.

Just Me and My Dad by Mercer Mayer (Published in 1982 by Golden Press). Ages 4-8.

Me, Dad and Number 6 by Dana Andrew Jennings (Published in 1997 by Harcourt Brace). Ages 4-8.

Down Syndrome

Be Good to Eddie Lee by Virginia Fleming, illustrated by Floyd Cooper (Published in 1993 by Philomel Books). Ages 4-8.

The Falcon's Wing by Dawna Lisa Buchanan (Published in 1992 by Orchard Books). Ages 9-12.

Dawn and Whitney, Friends Forever (Baby Sitters Club No. 78) by Ann M. Martin (Published in 1994 by Apple). Ages 9-12.

My Sister Annie by Bill Dodds (Published in 1997 by Boyds Mills Press). Ages 9-12.

Our Brother Has Down's by Shelley Cairo, Jasmine Cairo, Tara Cairo (Published in 1985 by Firefly Books). All ages.

Radiance Descending: A Novel by Paula Fox (Published in 1997 by DK Ink). Ages 9-12.

Thumbs Up, Rico! by Maria Testa, illustrated by Diane Paterson (Published in 1994 by Concept Books).

Ages 5-11.

Where's Chimpy by Berniece Rabe (Published in 1991 by A. Whitman). Ages 4-8.

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Of Interest

Public Television Series to Address Child Care

As the nation rallies to meet the challenges identified by the White House Conference on Child Care, the Annenberg/CPB Project announced *The Whole Child: A Caregiver's Guide to the First Five Years*, a new public television series on child care. The 13-part series on developmental education and care from birth to age 5, targeting both child care providers and parents, will begin airing on PBS stations in January. *The Whole Child* identifies the elements necessary for high-quality developmental care of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers by showing real caregivers at work. The series is based on the text of the same name and is hosted by the author Joanne Hendrick.

Children and caregivers were taped for the series in 10 different Detroit-area child care settings, private and public (including Head Start), urban and suburban, corporate, academic, and home-based. According to Sarah Greene, National Head Start Association CEO, "The program is a wonderful tool for child care providers, training personnel, and parents alike. The skills that are so important to us are demonstrated in the clearest possible way because we see them through real interactions of children and caregivers."

In addition, the thirteen 30-minute programs constitute a one-semester comprehensive course that meets the criteria for the CDA (Child Developmental Associate) certification when used with the textbook and accompanying program guides.

The *Whole Child* is available to PBS stations through a weekly feed beginning in January 1998. Viewers will need to contact local stations for their airdates and times (and to let the station know that they support the series). Viewers interested in taking the course for credit can contact their local community colleges or 1-800-LEARNER.

The program will also be available on videocassette in both English and Spanish for $295 for the series or $24.95 for single half-hour programs. To buy the series or to order any of the accompanying print materials (including the textbook, faculty guide, student guide, or parent guide), call the Annenberg/CPB Project at 1-800-LEARNER.

For more information, visit the Annenberg/CPB Project Internet site:
http://www.learner.org/collections/multimedia/childdev/whseries/

Prepared for *Parent News* by Dawn Ramsburg.

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

Interest Projects for Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts.

Noting the importance of choosing a project that is interesting or relevant to one's personal goals, this manual provides activities that can be undertaken to earn cadette- and senior-level girl scout interest patches. Part 1 of the manual deals with procedures to develop an interest project, including working with consultants, interviewing, role-playing, and the relationship between interest projects and the Girl Scout Silver and Gold Awards. Interest Projects are grouped in five areas: (1) life skills, including car maintenance, child care conflict resolution, home improvement, leadership, and developing a business; (2) nature, science, and health, including birds, cooking, inventions, pets, math, space exploration, and women's health; (3) communications, including computers, desktop publishing, media, public relations, reading, and writing; (4) the arts and history, including architecture and environmental design, folk arts, dance, museum, and textile arts; and (4) sports and recreation, including backpacking, camping, outdoor survival, and sailing. Each interest project contains four types of activities, skill builders, technology-related activities, service projects, and career exploration. Details regarding requirements for the interest patch are provided. Included are charts for recording progress and lists of resources and organizations. Cost: $7.50. PS025708

Girl Scouts of the U.S.A./National Equipment Service
420 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10018-2798
Telephone: 800-221-6707
Fax: 800-643-0639

America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being.

This 1997 report of the Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics presents nationwide data on the well-being of America's children. The statistical report is based on 25 indicators of child well-being: (1) child poverty, (2) food security, (3) housing problems, (4) secure parental employment, (5) health insurance, (6) summary health status, (7) prenatal care, (8) infant mortality, (9) low birthweight, (10) childhood immunization, (11) activity limitation, (12) child mortality, (13) adolescent mortality, (14) teen births, (15) cigarette smoking, (16) alcohol use, (17) substance abuse, (18) victims of violent crimes, (19) difficulty speaking English, (20) family reading, (21) early childhood education, (22) math and reading proficiency, (23) youth high school completion, (24) detached youth, and (25) higher education, with a special section on (26) child abuse and neglect. Part 1 of the report describes population and family characteristics of children in the United States. Part 2 presents results on the well-being indicators. Findings indicate that the percentage of children in poverty and who report not having enough to eat declined slightly during the 1990s. The percentage of mothers receiving early prenatal care and immunization rates increased in the 1990s. Mortality rates for most ages and population groups declined in the past 20 years. Rates of cigarette smoking, substance abuse, and violent criminal victimization of adolescents increased during the last decade. The percent of youngsters enrolled in preschool increased since 1980. Mathematics proficiency rates increased modestly, and high school completion rates increased substantially for blacks since 1980. (Appendices contain detailed data tables, and data sources and limitations.) PS025700

Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics
Office of Management and Budget
National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
555 New Jersey Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20208-5574
Internet: http://nces.ed.gov/

Parent's Guide to the Internet.

This 1997 guide to the Internet from the U.S. Department of Education is intended to help parents—regardless of their level of technological know-how—make use of the online world as an important educational tool. The guide cuts through the overwhelming amount of consumer information to give parents an introduction to the Internet and how to navigate it. The guide suggests how parents can allow their children to tap into the wonders of the Internet while safeguarding them from its potential hazards. For more information:

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
Media and Information Services
555 New Jersey Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20208-5570
Telephone: 800-USA-LEARN
Internet: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/internet/

Strengthening Refugee Families: Designing Programs for Refugee and Other Families in Need

This manual details the principles and practices of the Refugee Families Program (RFP) in Chicago and the issues that have arisen in connecting these families to the educational medical, welfare, and other institutions that can provide the family-strengthening support they need. The approach of RFP is to work with families through their preschool-age children, to help them prepare their child for public school, and to introduce parents to concepts of child development foreign to their culture but necessary for adjusting to the new environment. Part 1 presents an overview of the program, part 2 describes its four part components, part 3 deals with program administration, and part 4 reviews lessons learned in the evolution of the program. Cost: $34.45, includes shipping.PS025018

Lyceum Books, Inc.
5758 S. Blackstone Ave.
Chicago, IL 60637

Telephone 773-643-1902
Email: Lyceum3@ibm.net

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Parent News for January 1998

Resources for Parents

Book Summaries and Reviews

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1. Lively, K. L.; Kleine, Paul F. (1996). ***The School as a Tool for Survival for Homeless Children.*** **Garland Publishing, Inc., 1000 A Sherman Ave., Hamden, CT 06514; telephone: 800-627-6273; fax: 203-230-1186; email: info@garland.com ($34).**

This book is part of a series, and this particular study used an ecological perspective to examine the development and implementation of Hopeful Horizons, a program designed to serve the educational needs of homeless children in Morgan County, Oklahoma. Information was collected through journals, observations, key informant interviews, surveys of administrators and staff, and psychological assessments of the children. Program components were education, social services and health, counseling, parent, and volunteer. Analyses indicated that: it was difficult to find time to develop individualized educational programs; volunteers were often not available; an additional counselor and social work assistant were needed to fulfill the social component; receiving schools were oppositional to receiving homeless students; the speech language pathologist position was eliminated because of difficulties in delivering services; and the counselor position was not filled for 2 years. In addition, parental difficulties limited parentsí participation. Without personnel to recruit and train volunteers, only 5 volunteers were involved in the first 2 years of the program. About 400 children were served by the program. Points of contention among staff included the shifting program, whether to include emancipated youth, agency commitment, and responsibility. Assessment results yielded a profile of a homeless child concerned about family relationships, but also experiencing one or more of the following: normal motivation; a visual-motor delay suggesting difficulty with school-related tasks; poor planning ability, organization skills, motor coordination, and emotional stability; and a positive academic self-concept, fairly high anxiety level, and depressive tendencies. From 1990-91 to 1994-95, the program grew in number of personnel, volunteers, children served, and budget and location size. (Contains approximately 70 references.) PS025619

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2. Davis, Laura; Keyser, Janis. (1997). ***Becoming the Parent You Want to Be: A Sourcebook of Strategies for the First Five Years*****. Broadway Books, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036; telephone: 212-782-8941; fax: 212-782-8338 (U.S., $20; Canada, $27.95).**

Parenting is a journey in which the parent grows and develops along with the child. Effective parents are competent, motivated learners who actively participate in the development of their parenting philosophy. By understanding themselves as individuals and as a team, and by patiently learning about their children through observing their behavior, parents can become much more effective. Noting how parents' own upbringing affects the complex dynamics of parenting, this sourcebook provides parents with the building blocks they need to discover their own parenting philosophy and develop effective parenting strategies. The first section of the book provides a framework for parenting based on nine principles, which include developing a vision for your family, learning about children, learning to trust struggle and disequilibrium, and teaching children to feel safe, strong, and good about their world. The remaining sections of the book explore the following characteristics of child development and parenting: (1) children's feelings, including responding to crying and tantrums and separation anxiety; (2) children's bodies, including sleeping, eating, toileting, and physical development; (3) dealing with difficult behavior, including moving beyond punishment and negotiating conflicts between parent and child; (4) social learning and play, including cooperation and conflict, sharing, and gender roles; and (5) family relationships, including parenting with a partner and building strong sibling relationships.

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3. Radencich, Marguerite C.; Schumm, Jeanne Shay. (1997). ***How to Help Your Child with Homework: Every Caring Parent's Guide to Encouraging Good Study Habits and Ending the Homework Wars*** **(For Parents of Children Ages 6-13). (Revised and Updated). Free Spirit Publishing, 400 First Ave. North, Suite 616, Minneapolis, MN 55401; telephone: 612-338-2068 ($14.95, plus shipping and handling).**

Noting that parent involvement in their children's schooling is a key to academic success, this book provides techniques and strategies for parents to help them assist their children with homework completion without conflict. Chapter one, "Getting Started," includes guidance on who should help with homework and how to set a homework schedule. Chapter two, "Troubleshooting," advises on assignment tracking and test preparation. Chapter three, "How to Help your Child with Reading," provides guidance on raising children's reading level, while chapter four, "How to Help Your Child with Spelling and Writing," covers studying spelling, handwriting, and composition. Chapter five, "How to Help Your Child with Math," includes information on helping children with concepts, word problems, and computation, while chapter six, "How to Help Your Child with Science, Social Studies, and Foreign Languages," includes test preparation and helping the child with graphics and with thematic units. Chapter seven, "How to Help Your Child with Formal Assessments and Projects" provides guidance on reports and term papers. Chapter eight, "Using Technology," includes advice on computer use and software selection. Chapter nine, "Playing Games," offers advice on game selection and home-made games. The final chapter lists further resources. Twenty-three reproducible pages are included for parental use. PS025652

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4. Lillard, Paula Polk. (1996). ***Montessori Today: A Comprehensive Approach to Education from Birth to Adulthood.*** **Schoken Books, 201 East 50th St., New York, NY 10022 (U.S., $12; Canada, $16.95).**

While many parents are familiar with Montessori schooling at the preschool level, Montessori elementary and middle schools have also proliferated in the past decade. This book provides an overview of Montessori theory and practice, with special emphasis on the child's elementary school years. Chapter 1 presents an introduction to the origin and theory of Montessori education. Chapter 2 gives an overview of Montessori education at the primary level. Montessori theory and practice for the elementary classroom are presented in chapters 3 through 8, including children's physical, social, and moral changes; Montessori's "Great Lessons" and "Key Lessons"; classroom materials and environment; the elementary teacher; freedom and responsibility; and observations of a Montessori elementary classroom. Chapter 9 discusses Montessori's ideas for high school and university education. The final chapter describes the current state of Montessori education in the United States and suggests its potential contribution for the future. An appendix contains a high school student's reflections on her Montessori education. The book contains notes organized by chapter and 20 references. PS025661

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5. Siegel, Eleanor; Siegel, Linda. (1993). ***Keys to Disciplining Your Young Child.*** **Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 250 Wireless Blvd., Hauppauge, NY 11788-3917; telephone: 516-434-3311;**

fax: 516-434-3723 (U.S.; $6.95; Canada, $8.95).

Close parent-child relationships begin with an early, effective approach to everyday discipline problems. This book focuses on children from infancy to age 5 and discusses practical ways to handle common discipline problems using an approach of identifying the problem and providing a goal behavior. Thirty-eight chapters address the following discipline issues: (1) planning before discipline problems arise; (2) "Disagreements over Discipline"; (3) spanking and nonphysical discipline techniques; (4) punishments, time-outs, and loss of privileges; (5) "Thumb Sucking and Pacifier Use"; (6) terrible twos; (7) "Problem-solving games"; (8) potty training; (9) lying; (10) stealing; (11) fighting; (12) bedtime problems; (13) "Crude language and name calling"; (14) "difficult child"; (15) chores; (16) "destructive discipline and constructive discipline"; (17) appearances; (18) company manners; (19) rewards; (20) discipline without sibling rivalry; (21) empathy; (22) telephone training; (23) limits in stores; (24) different rules; (25) apologizing; (26) "answering back"; (27) "dawdling and forgetfulness"; (28) "bringing friends home"; (29) manners; (30) "food preferences"; (31) "sharing"; (32) "discipline during and after illness"; (33) privacy and family discussions; (34) "aggressive or passive"; (35) television viewing; (36) parental exhaustion; (37) parental instincts; and (38) seeking outside advice. The last section provides sections for questions and answers, a glossary, a listing of resources for parents, and a bibliography of suggested readings. PS025877

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6. Lipsitz, Gail Josephson. (1997). ***Practical Parenting: A Jewish Perspective.*** **KTAV Publishing House, Inc., Box 6249, 900 Jefferson St., Hoboken, NJ 07030; telephone: 201-963-9524; fax: 201-963-0102 ($23).**

Based on the clinical expertise of social workers at Jewish Family Services of Central Maryland, this book presents practical advice for parents of all faiths, with each of 34 chapters exploring a specific parenting issue. The book is divided into five sections: (1) "Many Kinds of Families," dealing with only children, sibling struggles, adoption, children with disabilities, divorce and new relationships, and teaching children to appreciate differences; (2) "Stresses and Strains," addressing fears about school, peer relationships, stress management, positive discipline, and the power of laughter; (3) "Sensitive Issues," concerning money issues, sexuality, spoiling children, discussing events in parents' earlier lives with their children, and role models; (4) "Holidays and Seasons," makes suggestions for making the High Holidays meaningful for children, parent-child interaction during holidays, the December Dilemma, gift giving, helping young children respond to anti-Semitism, Passover, summer holidays, and summer camp; and (5) "L'Dor Va-Dor," focusing on fatherhood, adult child-parent relationships, intergenerational relationships, grandparents and divorce and intermarriage, and parenting parents. Resources for parents and children, listed by chapter, conclude the book. PS025896

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7. McCroskey, Jacquelyn; Meezan, William. (1997). ***Family Preservation and Family Functioning.*** **Child Welfare League of America, c/o PMDS, P.O. Box 2019, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-2019; telephone: 800-407-6273; 301-617-7825; fax: 301-206-9789; Internet: http://www.cwla.org (Stock No. 6142, $24.95).**

This book reports a study of the outcomes of home-based family preservation services for abusive and neglectful families in Los Angeles County. Using the Family Assessment Form, the research project evaluated services provided by two voluntary agencies and focused on changes in family functioning between the opening and closing of services during a yearlong follow-up period after services were completed, and over a 15-month period. It also measured changes in child behavior, home environment, traits of caregivers, and placement outcomes for children. Findings indicated that there were small but significant improvements in multiple aspects of family functioning in the service group but none in the comparison group. Home stimulation for infants and toddlers and elementary school children's behavior improved for the service group more than for the comparison group during the service period. Personal strengths of parents were associated with improvement in family functioning and child behavior. The service delivery model was not related to changes in family functioning. Parents and professionals defined problems and perceived improvement differently. Service group families were more satisfied with services than comparison families. Families referred by community-based sources were more successful in service than families referred by the Department of Child and Family Services. Psychological characteristics of parents were not influenced by services. There were no differences in placement rates or types for children in the service and comparison group families. (Appendices contain the Family Assessment Form and a description of the Family Services System Model. Each chapter contains references.) PS025919

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 900 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850)

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Resources for Parents

Organizations

The Lion & Lamb Project

The Lion & Lamb Project is an initiative to stop the merchandising of violence to children. It is a grassroots project created by parents for parents, helping families find alternatives to violent toys, games, and entertainment. The Lion & Lamb Project has created a Parent Action Kit with a variety of information about violent children's "entertainment," how it is affecting children, and what can be done to make a difference. In addition, the group provides workshops, resource materials, and other support to individuals and groups.

Contact

Lion & Lamb Project
Telephone: 301-654-3091
Email: lionlamb@lionlamb.org

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Newsletters

Mother & Child Online

Mother & Child Online is an electronic newsletter that is written "almost" monthly. This newsletter provides several short articles on a variety of topics. Topics featured in recent articles include ADHD, pets and children, preschool, allergies, and software reviews. For more information:

Mother & Child Online
4719 Reed Rd., Suite 217
Upper Arlington, OH 43220
Email: afarmer@earthnet-ltd.com
Internet: http://www.earthnet-Ltd.com/motherchild/toc.htm

Kangaroo Kids

Northwest Attachment Parenting, an organization founded to provide support and information to persons practicing attachment-style parenting, publishes a quarterly attachment parenting newsletter for Northwest families. The newsletter is distributed to various locations throughout the Puget Sound area. It is also available by subscription and will be available online soon. For more information:

Kangaroo Kids
P.O. Box 2433
Port Orchard, WA 98366
Email: kangarookids@usa.net
Internet: http://www.divadesign.com/news.htm

I Love My Nanny

I Love My Nanny is a free monthly publication for parents who are interested in hiring nannies, women who are interested in finding employment in the nanny field, and professionals who work with children and families. Recent issues have included articles on nanny insurance, finding high-quality child care online, and job postings for nannies. For more information:

I Love My Nanny, Inc.®
41 Crossroads Plaza, Suite 265
West Hartford, CT 06117

Telephone: 860-243-2222
Fax: 860-243-2662
Email: nannyluvsu@aol.com
Internet: http://www.ilovemynanny.com/articles.html

Parenting Today's Teen

Parenting Today's Teen is a bimonthly printed newsletter addressing the challenge of raising a teenager in the 90's. Each issue features a variety of topics including guidance on building a solid family, law enforcement advice, single-parenting tips, news, and resources for additional assistance. (A special subscription rate of $15/one year and $30/two years is currently being offered.) For more information:

Kayena Communications
4425 Cass St., Suite E
San Diego, CA 92109
Email: editor@parentingteens.com

UCLA Working Parents Newsletter

The *UCLA Working Parents Newsletter* features articles about childrearing, health and nutrition, and suggestions for family activities. The newsletter is aimed at employers to create a friendly environment for employees who are balancing work and home responsibilities. It is published nine times per year, and subscribers receive a one-page, front-and-back, high-quality master copy ready for duplicating. It is also available to users who are not affiliated with UCLA. For more information:

Kit Kohllenberg
Telephone: 310-206-3078
Email: kkollenberg@be.ucla.edu
Internet: http://www.childcare.ucla.edu/CHILDCARE/wpn.htm

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NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: Parenting from Tots to Teens—INCAF Online

Description: The International Network for Children and Families (INCAF) is a worldwide organization that, through parenting education, is committed to creating new generations of responsible children who have higher self-esteem and better cooperation skills. The Web site offers: (1) Newsletters, (2) Articles, (3) Catalog of Resources, (4) Upcoming Events, and (5) Speaker's Bureau.

Address: http://www.redirectingbehavior.com/

Name: Responsible Parenting

Description: Responsible Parenting is a nonprofit corporation formed to advocate the rights of children. The primary focus of this Web site is the detrimental effects that divorce can have on children. The goal of the site is to offer parents assistance in finding "child friendly" solutions to the problems associated with the breakup of the family. Responsible Parenting is dedicated to educating parents and helping parents find support, custody, and visitation solutions that will help their children cope with the stress of separation.

Address: http://www.responsibleparenting.com/ **[Editorial Note: Responsible Parenting, Inc. and the associated Web site has ceased to exist as of April 8, 1998.]**

Name: The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities

Description: The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) is the national information and referral center that provides information on disabilities and disability-related issues for families, educators, and other professionals. NICHCY focuses specifically on children and youth from birth to age 22. Materials on the site are also available in Spanish. NICHCY provides information and makes referrals in areas related to specific disabilities, early intervention, special education and related services, individualized education programs, family issues, disability organizations, professional associations, and education rights. NICHCY's services include: (1) personal responses to specific questions, (2) publications, (3) referrals to other organizations, and (4) information searches of their database and library.

Address: http://www.nichcy.org

Name: Children's Safety Network: National Injury and Violence Prevention Center

Description: The Children's Safety Network: National Injury and Violence Prevention Center provides resources and technical assistance to maternal and child health agencies and other organizations seeking to reduce unintentional injuries and violence to children and adolescents. It is one of six Children's Safety Network Resource Centers funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This site contains numerous publications and resources.

Address: http://www.edc.org/HHD/csn/

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Resources for Parents

The Parenting Calendar

Note: NPIN now features a graphically formatted PARENTING Calendar (similar to print calendars) in order to make it easier to find and view each month's announcements and conferences. You may now download and/or print each month's calendar for your personal use. In addition, only new items from the PARENTING Calendar will now be included in Parent News. For a full listing of conferences, go to the PARENTING Calendar section of NPIN.

Conference: Alternatives to Expulsion, Suspension, and Dropping Out of School

Date: February 5-7, 1998

Place: Holiday Inn International Drive Resort, Orlando, Florida

Description: This conference will bring together diverse government, business, labor, education, religious, law enforcement, and community organizations, as well as concerned individuals, to address the problems created by students who are expelled, suspended, or who drop out or are considered delinquent, violent, or dangerous. It will also address what can be done to reduce the number of young people at high risk for these behaviors and to help youth with opportunities to return to schools or engage in work or educational activities that increase their chances of becoming productive and healthy citizens. Attendees will learn about exemplary programs that change attitudes, increase skills, provide opportunities, enhance staff development, and foster community collaboration—including parent involvement.

Contact:

Telephone: 800-537-4903

Conference: National Head Start Association's 25th Annual Training Conference

Date: April 20-25, 1998

Place: Seattle, Washington

Description: At the National Head Start Association's 25th Annual Training Conference, attendees will learn ways to market Head Start to local communities, increase self-confidence and self-image, develop partnerships between Head Start and other organizations, understand new research, and network with Head

Start peers from all regions.

Contact

Telephone: 703-739-0875

Conference: The Many Faces of Family Support: Creating a Culture of Community Responsibility

Sponsor: Family Resource Coalition of America

Date: April 29-May 2, 1998

Place: Chicago Marriot Downtown Hotel, Chicago, Illinois

Description: At the 7th National Conference of the Family Resource Coalition of America, family support professionals can share their experience and expertise, learn from one another, make connections, and clarify the vision of the family support field.

Contact:

Family Resource Coalition of America
20 North Wacker Dr., Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60606
Telephone: 312-341-0900
Fax: 312-341-9361
Email: conference98@famres.org
Internet: http://www.frca.org/

[**Editorial Notes**, January 30, 1998 and June 19, 1998: The mailing address and Web address for the Family Resource Coalition of America have changed. The mailing address and Web address above are the correct addresses as of 6/19/98 and replace the previous addresses in the original issue of Parent News.]

Conference: Eleventh Annual Conference on Students At-Risk

Date: March 5-8, 1998

Place: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Phoenix, Arizona

Description: This annual conference on at-risk students will be conducted with the National School Conference Institute.

Contact:

National School Conference Institute (NSCI)
P.O. Box 37527
Phoenix, AZ 85069-7527

Telephone: 602-371-8655
Fax: 602-371-8790
Email: Nsci1@aol.com
Internet: http://www.nscinet.com/newsite/mi8.htm

Conference: Early Childhood—A Closer Look at Pre-K–Early Elementary

Date: March 26-29, 1998

Place: Sheraton World Resort, Orlando, Florida

Description: Topics featured at this conference include: Key Points in Brain Research, the Meaning of "Developmentally Appropriate," "Growing" Healthy Children, Documenting Your Children's Work, Relating to Non-Traditional Homes, Parent Involvement with Extended Family, Ethics in Education, and Building School Community.

Contact:

Professional Center for School Conferences
Telephone: 602-404-4349
Fax: 602-404-4351
Internet: http://www.educon.com/

Conference: Eleventh Annual Conference on Negotiating the Transitions of Family Life

Sponsor: Ohio Association of Family-Based Services; American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Ohio Division; Ohio Council of Family Relations; Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at Bowling Green State University

Date: April 3-4, 1998

Place: Concourse Hotel, Columbus, Ohio

Description: The Annual Joint Conference on the Family gathers professionals, educators, clinicians, and students from a variety of disciplines. The conference provides both a forum for the exchange of ideas and an opportunity to network with others interested in the healthy development of human relationships. Persons experienced in family life, sex education or therapy, medicine, psychology, sociology, social work, couples and family therapy, counseling, law, religion, and research are encouraged to attend this conference.

Contact:

Dr. Bill Northey
Human Development and Family Studies
Department of Family and Consumer Sciences
Bowling Green State University

Bowling Green, OH 43403
Telephone: 419-372-7848
Fax: 419-372-7854
Email: northey@bgnet.bgsu.edu

Conference: Annual Building on Family Strengths Conference

Date: April 19-21, 1998

Place: Hilton Hotel, Portland, Oregon

Contact:

Kaye Exo, Conference Coordinator
Research and Training Center on Family Support and Children's Mental Health
P.O. Box 751
Portland, OR 97201-0751
Telephone: 503-725-5558
TTY: 800-735-2900
Fax: 503-725-4180
Email: exok@pdx.edu

Conference: Investing in Care

Sponsor: Nova Scotia Child and Youth Care Worker's Association; the Department of Child & Youth Study, Mount Saint Vincent University; and the Council of Canadian Child and Youth Care Associations

Date: May 27-30, 1998

Place: Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Description: The future of services for children and youth in the next century and beyond will depend on the investment made in them now. What needs to be done and what can be done to ensure that the investment will be profitable for individual children and for society is the focus of this conference. Conference strands include: Investing in and for Professionals; Investing in and for Communities and Families; Investing in and for Programs and Services; and Investing in, for, and by Youth Themselves.

Contact:

Eleventh National Child & Youth Care Conference
Mount Saint Vincent University
Halifax, NS Canada B3M 2J6
Telephone: 902-457-6587
Fax: 902-445-3960
Email: Child.Youth.Care.Conference@MSVU.Ca
Internet: http://serf.msvu.ca/chys/conferen/

Conference: 22nd Annual National Quality Infant/Toddler Caregiving Workshop

Sponsor: Syracuse University College for Human Development and Division of Continuing Education

Date: June 15-19, 1998

Place: Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

Description: This national workshop is designed to help people seeking an understanding of infant development and practical training in infant caregiving. The workshop is based on research and theory in the areas of socio-emotional, cognitive, motor, sensory, and language development. The workshop will demonstrate the necessity of integrating the different developmental domains so that caregivers may see and interact with the whole child. Practical applications of lectures will include observations and interactions with infants. Dr. Alice Honig will be the primary teacher and trainer, but other speakers will also be included in the workshop.

Contact:

Syracuse University Continuing Education Inquiries
610 East Fayette St.
Syracuse, NY 13244-6020
Telephone: 315-443-3273
Fax: 315-443-4174
Email: PartTime@uc.syr.edu

or

Dr. Alice Honig
Telephone: 315-443-4296
Fax: 315-443-2562
Email: ahonig@mailbox.syr.edu

Conference: Program Evaluation and Family Violence Research: An International Conference

Sponsor: The Family Research Laboratory, University of New Hampshire

Date: July 26-29, 1998

Place: New England Center, Durham, New Hampshire

Description: The Family Research Laboratory invites you to a conference with a special focus on program evaluation research. In recent years, as the family violence research field has grown, an increasing number of investigators have devoted themselves to looking at prevention and intervention programs. This conference is intended to be a forum to exchange findings and innovations regarding program evaluations and to help improve the general quality of this work.

Contact:

Conference Secretary
Family Research Lab
University of New Hampshire
126 Horton Social Science Center
Durham, NH 03824
Telephone: 603-862-1888
Fax: 603-862-1122
Email: khf@hopper.unh.edu
Internet: http://www.unh.edu/frl/conf98.htm

Conference: Children and Families in an Era of Rapid Change: Creating a Shared Agenda for Researchers, Practitioners, and Policymakers

Sponsor: Administration of Children, Youth and Families; the Administration for Children and Families; Columbia University School of Public Health; Center for Population and Family Health; and Society for Research in Child Development

Date: July 9-12, 1998

Place: Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC

Description: Head Start's Fourth National Research Conference is called "Children and Families in an Era of Rapid Change: Creating a Shared Agenda for Researchers, Practitioners, and Policymakers." The purpose of this conference is to bring together those involved in key research with those in leadership positions in the Administration for Children and Families and other relevant government groups, national organizations in early childhood, as well as the leadership of Head Start. A major goal is to facilitate interaction among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in order for them to better understand how research may be applied to effective programming and policy for low-income families.

Contact:

Dr. Faith Lamb Parker, Project Director
Columbia School of Public Health
Center for Population and Family Health
60 Haven Avenue, B-3
New York, NY 10032
Telephone: 212-304-5251
Fax: 212-544-1911
Email: FLP1@columbia.edu
Internet: http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/sph/popfam/headstartconf.html

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National Parent Information Network

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  People Make Dreams Come True, and Technology Expands the Possibilities: An Educational Journal across the United States
  by Mark, Betsy, Donald, Kelly, and Stacy Blondin
- Community Spotlight:
  Grandparent Programs
  by Debbie Reese
- Of Interest:
  - *"The Social Context of Education"*
  - *Children as Activists*
  - *Children's Humor*
  - *Children's Books*
  - *The Importance of Family Meals*
  - *Understanding Parent Involvement from a Parent's Perspective* by Dawn Ramsburg
  - *Security Blankets and Doctor Visits*
- Resources for Parents
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Parent News Editorial Information

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Editor: Laurel Preece
NPIN Coordinator: Anne Robertson

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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster

Parent News for February 1998

What's New on NPIN

For a listing and description of items that are new on NPIN over the last three months, see the What's New on NPIN section on the NPIN Home Page.

What's New: Resources added to NPIN during January 1998

Several new items have been added to several topical areas in the Resources for Parents / Full Text of Parenting-Related Materials section.

In the Early Childhood: Learning section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *"I Can Do It Myself": Encouraging Independence in Young Children*
  This publication addresses the needs of children of all ages to be independent, and discusses how parents can facilitate that process effectively throughout the child's early years.
- *El Reto: !A Leer, América!*
  This booklet for caregivers of children from birth through age five was developed by the AmeriCorps Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center as a project of the Corporation for National Service; the U.S. Department of Education; and the Child Care Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

In the Helping Your Child Learn at Home section, the following resources have been added:

- *El Reto: !A Leer, América!*
  This booklet for caregivers of children from birth through age five was developed by the AmeriCorps Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center as a project of the Corporation for National Service; the U.S. Department of Education; and the Child Care Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

In the Parents and Families in Society section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Community Involvement in K-12 Career Education*
  This publication discusses how various areas of the community can be involved in the career education of students in Kindergarten through high school. Involvement of community businesses, community agencies, schools, parents, and other community members is explored.
- *Simple Gift Giving for the Early Years*
  This publication provides ideas for inexpensive and fun play materials for children ages birth through 8 years, divided by age group.

- *Parents Guide to the Internet*
  This U.S. Department of Education publication discusses how parents can learn about the internet and gives basic information for getting on the internet and traveling safely and easily. The publication also contains a glossary of internet-related terms as well as internet sites of interest to parents.
- *Including Your Child*
  This U.S. Department of Education publication provides parents with information to guide their children through the first 8 years of their lives. In addition to chapters devoted to each year, the publication features a developmental progress chart; an extensive list of resources including associations and organizations, internet sites, government contacts, and minority family groups; and a list of important names and phone numbers.

In the Parents and Schools as Partners section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Promoting Secondary School Transitions for Immigrant Adolescents*
  This publication highlights three ways educators can help immigrant secondary school students through critical educational transitions and provides brief descriptions of three programs that are working to facilitate these transitions.

In the Teens (14-20) section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Promoting Secondary School Transitions for Immigrant Adolescents*
  This publication highlights three ways educators can help immigrant secondary school students through critical educational transitions and provides brief descriptions of three programs that are working to facilitate these transitions.
- *Models of Adolescent Transition*
  This publication addresses adolescents' often difficult transition from the school environment to the working world. Both personal and career concerns are addressed, and suggestions are given for making the transition as smooth as possible.

Reviews or summaries of the following parenting-related books were added to the Parenting Resources: Books section of NPIN:

- *The School as a Tool for Survival for Homeless Children* by K. L. Lively and Paul F. Kleine
- *Becoming the Parent You Want to Be: A Sourcebook of Strategies for the First Five Years* by Laura Davis and Janis Keyser
- *How to Help Your Child with Homework: Every Caring Parent's Guide to Encouraging Good Study Habits and Ending the Homework Wars (For Parents of Children Ages 6-13)* by Marguerite C. Radencich and Jeanne Shay Schumm
- *Montessori Today: A Comprehensive Approach to Education from Birth to Adulthood* by Paula Polk Lillard
- *Keys to Disciplining Your Young Child* by Eleanor Siegel and Linda Siegel
- *Practical Parenting: A Jewish Perspective* by Gail Josephson Lipsitz
- *Family Preservation and Family Functioning* by Jacquelyn McCroskey and William Meezan

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Information on the following parenting-related organizations was added to the Resources for Those Who Work with Parents: Organizations section of NPIN:

- The Lion & Lamb Project

Information on the following parenting-related newsletters was added to the Parenting Resources: Newsletters section of NPIN:

- *Mother & Child Online*
- *Kangaroo Kids*
- *I Love My Nanny*
- *Parenting Today's Teen*
- *UCLA Working Parents Newsletter*

Several new links to Internet resources were added in the Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents section.

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February's Feature

People Make Dreams Come True, and Technology Expands the Possibilities: An Educational Journey across the United States

by Mark, Betsy, Donald, Kelly, and Stacy Blondin

Members of the Blondin family were featured presenters at the Families, Technology, and Education Conference on October 31–Novemeber 1, 1997. Their presentation challenged the audience to think about new educational possibilities that are available to families when they are given access to new technologies and have the courage to make use of those resources. The following is an excerpt from their presentation. The complete proceedings will be available in the spring of 1998 by contacting the following address:

ERIC/EECE and the National Parent Information Network
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign, IL 61820-7469
Telephone: 800-583-4135 or 217-333-1386
Email: arobrtsn@uiuc.edu
Internet: http://www.npin.org

People make dreams come true, and technology expands the possibilities. Our family dreamed of making an educational journey around the United States. A husband and wife of 17 years, a 14-year-old son and 12-year-old twin daughters turned that dream into reality for almost nine incredible months. The adventure revolved around a unique learning experience that incorporated current technology.

Prior to finalizing plans for the trip, Donald, Kelly, and Stacy were enrolled at Northwest Academy, a new charter school in northern Michigan. It is a science and technology-based public academy for grades 6 through 12. We approached the school with our plan to use email and create a family Web site on the Internet as we traveled. School board members were not only willing, they were enthused to try this mutually beneficial experiment.

Armed with a laptop computer and a digital camera on loan from Northwest Academy, and our desktop computer installed in the motor home, we began our technology-based travel school. The Web site was designed so students anywhere could tune in, share, and learn through our experiences and interact with us. Our technology-driven, hands-on learning began in Cleveland with science, rock and roll, and natural history. It progressed to ocean life in Maine, independence and immigration in New England, and history and heroics in Philadelphia. It intensified during our two-week stay in Washington, DC, and never ended. Southern coastal areas generated discussions about slavery and the Civil War. Florida and Louisiana were natural classrooms for study and discussion of Spanish explorers, cultural diversity, and environmental issues.

Our incredible weeklong stay at Big Bend National Park in southwest Texas illustrates one example of the educational adventure that characterized our journey. The Sierra del Carmen, the Chisos Mountains, the Chihuahua Desert, and the Rio Grande River provided endless opportunities for discovery and understanding. Knowledge we gained from nature hikes and ranger-led programs at Big Bend proved invaluable to us throughout the journey.

We traveled more than 25,000 miles. Our route took us to 40 states, ocean to ocean, top to bottom. Reading, computer time, Web site building, email, schoolwork, saxophone playing, and major discussions filled the travel hours. Using the Internet to communicate and build our Web site resulted in opportunities to meet interesting people. We became very creative in finding a phone jack for accessing the Internet with our laptop. These interactions and the educational nature of our project led to many discussions on education, technology, and where it is all headed.

Building the Web site was an education in itself. Organizing, editing, and presenting the material and then learning how to put it all on the Internet was challenging. We hoped our site would give students a practical and interesting place to explore and learn as we provided links to attractions, museums, and events we visited or learned about. As we look back on our magical adventure, we are proud of the risks we took and the opportunity we seized. We revel in the pure joy of learning and experiencing so much of our country together. A few short years ago our project would not have been possible. The possibilities for the future of technology in education and the role of families therein are infinite.

Learning Experiences

In many ways, our adventure successfully combined current technology, older technology, such as the video camera, and traditional resources, such as reference books, lectures, and hands-on activities.

The five of us spent much of our learning time together. Many of our multisensory learning experiences took place at big-name attractions and popular places, but others occurred spontaneously and naturally along the way.

Computer Use on the Road

In terms of using computers and the Internet on the road, we felt like pioneers, entering and exploring new territory. Progress in technology is at various stages and differs as much from location to location as people do. We often experienced difficulty in finding places where we could hop on the information highway. A librarian at the University of Maine in Portland said, "Maybe the country is not as wired as we think it is." He was right. At home in northern Michigan, local progress and easy access had spoiled us.

In Scarborough, Maine, we found a public library very well equipped and online, but in New Orleans, the public library had not yet begun the process. Minuteman Science and Technology High School in Lexington, Massachusetts, had just built a tremendous computer lab, was in the advanced stages of being wired, and at the time we visited, was preparing to participate in a nationwide Internet Day.

We found only one public modem access location easily, and that was a kiosk in the Honolulu Airport. There you could bring your laptop and connect as easily as using a phone booth. Several hotels have wonderful media rooms with modem access, computers and printers, and fax machines. We used one of those in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Some private RV parks advertise telephone service, and though we thought we would be able to access the Internet at these places, many of them offered phone access only for long-term guests. At three or four campgrounds, we had phone access, and it was a true luxury!

Internet cafes are sprinkled throughout the country—we visited three or four—but some did not have extra phone lines to access. We could work on the Web site and check email through their computers, but they normally charge hourly fees. At two of these cafes, we were treated like royalty, given free online time and a lot of attention because of the interest in our project.

Multimedia stores such as Kinko's did not usually have phone lines available for the laptop, and they charge an hourly fee to use their computers. At the time we stopped in one of these types of stores, they were just installing extra phone lines for modem access.

Lessons Learned

As we traveled and conversed with people, we kept hearing that, in general, students and school staff did not seem to have enough training, access to, or time on computers to browse Web sites such as ours and take advantage of what is offered on the Internet.

From our own school, we heard that computer time was being limited because students were misusing computer access, and sufficient supervision was not feasible. We have heard this story countless times; it is a sad situation, but one that can be improved. A unique and wonderful educational resource is not being utilized to its potential.

Some school districts have hired full-time employees to facilitate computer and Internet use, supervise labs, and help staff find efficient ways to use the Internet with their students. Incorporating computer and Internet use in classrooms is a challenge, but it is one we can help each other tackle.

As we traveled, talked and learned, and tried to use all the resources possible during our adventure, we saw many ways in which technology could be used by families, by schools, and by communities in educational endeavors. Although much of what we did was experimental and some of our goals were not wholly realized, many of them were, and we feel the basic concept and ideas were sound.

We have already mentioned how schools, colleges, and businesses can be involved in a project such as ours, and how this kind of adventure could be shared with students all over the world. Educational institutions around the country can take advantage of current and near-future technology by:

- Sharing information more efficiently through mailing lists, Internet resources, and Web sites. Many schools are now online, and students and staff around the world can "compare notes" on countless subjects or conduct cultural exchanges.
- Taking advantage of anyone (student or staff) who travels by allowing students at the school to share his or her experiences through technology.
- Allowing students from all backgrounds and in all economic circumstances to share the wonders available on the Internet.

Technology can allow families to spend invaluable time together and strengthen their relationships by:

- Allowing them to take extended trips any time of year, during which children can continue their regular schoolwork and receive credit for nontraditional educational experiences.
- Allowing children to travel extensively with parents whose jobs require travel or can be done on the road.
- Being a way families can spend time together, using software or Internet sources to do research, word processing, and artwork, or visiting educational places via their Web sites.
- Providing opportunities for parents and community members to volunteer in school technology labs and work closely with students.

The first two points are already possible if parents choose to home school their children. But why not create situations wherein schools can also benefit? Schools could receive funding for those students, and everyone could benefit immensely from assignments shared by students at school and students on the road.

Our fundamental thinking about education would have to change substantially, along with traditional funding methods, attendance policies, and assessment procedures, but some changes are already taking place.

From the perspective of a family who traveled the country for nine months with the support of a public school, the future holds infinite possibilities for families and education, with all that technology affords us. We need only to find the ways to open all the doors.

In many ways, our adventure was richer than we had anticipated and turned out better than expected. The school year we spent traveling as a family was more rewarding than imaginable. We spoke with people, in person or by email, from everywhere, in various professions, of all ages and in all stages of life, who had made journeys like ours in their lives or who shared our dream of spending more time with their children. Many of them said that if they had known it was possible, they would have done it.

The message we would like to share is that it can be done. We need to open our eyes and hearts, constantly question what we are doing and why, and use all tools and resources available to make the dreams we imagine come true.

Some Commonly Asked Questions about Our Adventure

How did you decide to make this trip?

Late in the winter of 1995-96, we saw or read something about extensive travel. Our son says it all began when we watched *Bridges of Madison County* and admired the photographer's lifestyle on the road, but our memories fail us on that point. We thought it would be great to travel the country and show our children the major sights and historical places. We have always believed that if you really want to do something, you find a way. We talked about it a lot and decided that we could do it. Due to a job change for Mark, we were in the process of re-evaluating values, priorities, and career options. During this time, Mark's father died unexpectedly, and his death confirmed our feelings that nothing is forever and that very few of us get to spend enough time with our quickly growing children. Ours were at perfect ages to handle school on the road for a year and to remember the trip forever. The decision seemed right, and circumstances made the timing ideal. We were also trying to make decisions about school for our children that year, considering moving to a warmer climate, and thinking of returning to college ourselves, so the trip was also about looking for work or possible places to relocate.

How did you manage the expense?

This is an issue most people are curious about. We used our retirement-type savings to fund the adventure. It was and is one of the biggest risks for us, but we think the monetary consequences are worth the experience we had. We kept our house and rented it out for three of the months we were gone. Now we are totally starting over financially. Some aspects of the trip were less expensive than they could have been because we received support from some organizations and free admission to some places we visited.

How did you travel, and how did school on the road go?

We drove and lived in a 34-foot Coachmen class A motor home and towed our minivan. For our desktop computer, we installed a computer station in the motor home. Northwest Academy loaned us the laptop computer and a digital camera (for which Kodak gave a discount) so we could interact with students and teachers and send information and pictures to the Web site. Our children had textbooks and general outlines from school, and they did traditional work in math and language arts. Science, social studies, music, art, and physical wellness fell into place as intrinsic parts of our journey.

How did you all get along in a confined space for that period of time?

Great! We were not as confined as most people imagine. Although we were in the motor home a lot, we were also out of it a lot—sightseeing, exploring, hiking. A few more minor squabbles, along with getting on each other's nerves a little, occurred on the road than would have at home. It was stressful at times, just navigating and accomplishing daily chores, but we knew before we left that our family dynamics and personalities would weather a long adventure.

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Community Spotlight

Grandparent Programs

by Debbie Reese

The Many Faces of Grandparenting

> *"My daughter is not able to care for her children; I've been caring for them for several years now." "My son and his family live two blocks away, but I almost never see my grandchildren." "My son moved his family to another state to take a job, and I hardly ever see my grandchildren." "I am providing child care for my grandchildren so their parents can work."*

Grandparents can feel overwhelmed or ignored, depending on the role they play in their grandchildren's lives. In today's society, an increasing number of grandparents find themselves responsible for raising their children's children. There are many reasons for this trend, including death of the parents, parental abandonment, drug-related prison terms, or mental illness.

According to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau (1998), 4 million children (6% of all children) were living in their grandparents' homes in 1996. Of that number, 1.4 million did not have a parent also living in the home, which means that these children's grandparents were solely responsible for parenting their grandchildren.

When grandparents suddenly find themselves raising their grandchildren, many report feeling alone, bewildered, and unsure of how to begin. To meet the needs of grandparents raising their grandchildren, programs, organizations, and support groups have been developed and are available across the country. These organizations provide many resources, ranging from legal information to coping skills.

In 1993, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) opened the Grandparent Information Center to provide grandparent caregivers with information on resources and services, and referrals to grandparent support groups. Grandparents and great-grandparents who contact the Center range in age from their 30s to their 70s (and older), with the most frequent age range being 50- to 60-years-old. Half of all the grandparents who contacted the Center work, but many are on a fixed income (Woodworth, 1995).

In New York, grandparents can turn to "Grandparents Reaching Out (GRO)." Mildred Horn, founder and president of GRO, arranges for guest speakers and organizes social events. She is also planning a group therapy program for grandchildren. At social events, members of GRO are able to help each other through difficult problems based on their own experiences. GRO is also active in legislative issues related to grandparents.

Not all grandparents are raising their grandchildren. Many do not live anywhere near their grandchildren and must work at maintaining a long-distance relationship. For the last 12 years, the Foundation for

Grandparenting, based in Santa Fe, New Mexico, has been running "Grandparent Grandchildren Summer Camp" during the summer. Grandparent(s) and their grandchild (or grandchildren) spend a week together at a camp in New York, engaging in activities such as hiking and boating. The camp founder, Dr. Arthur Kornhaber, brings grandparents together each day to discuss grandparenting issues, such as distance and divorce. Kornhaber finds that bringing the grandparent and grandchildren together in a natural, outdoor setting provides a powerful opportunity for them to get to know each other and form a lasting bond.

Many resources are available to help grandparents who are providing child care for their grandchildren. Dr. T. Berry Brazelton and Ann Brown, Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, recently put together a brochure titled "A Grandparents' Guide for Family Nurturing and Safety." The full text of the brochure can be viewed on the World Wide Web at http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/grand/grand.htm. It includes many tips for grandparents, including:

- Establish a weekly time for the grandparent and grandchild to talk over the telephone. Parents can encourage the child to give the grandparent one "news" item to get them started.
- Arrange to do something special with each grandchild on an individual basis. Keep in mind each child's individual interests as you plan these events.
- Make your home child safe for your grandchildren, keeping in mind the different ages of the children. A home that has been child-proofed for an infant may not be safe for a toddler.

Many additional resources for grandparents available on the Internet as well as in bookstores and libraries are listed below.

Books

de Toledo, Sylvie; Brown, Deborah Edler. (1995). *Grandparents as Parents: A Survival Guide for Raising a Second Family*. New York: Guilford Publications. ISBN: 1-57230-020-5. ED393549

Doucette-Dudman, Deborah; LaCure, Jeffrey R. (1996). *Raising Our Children's Children*. Minneapolis, MN: Fairview Press. ISBN: 0-925190-91-8. ED397994

Takas, Marianne. (1995). *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: A Guide to Finding Help and Hope*. New York: Brookdale Foundation. Available from: National Foster Parent Association, Inc., 9 Dartman Dr., Crystal Lake, IL 60014 ($3 for first copy, $1 each additional copy). ED394712

Publications cited with an ED number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

Newsletters

AGAST Grandparent Information newsletter. AGAST is the Alliance of Grandparents Against SIDS Tragedy. To obtain a newsletter, call 800-793-SIDS and leave your name and address.

Grandparents Journal. Sample copy available for $2 by writing to Elinor Nuxoll, 1419 E. Marietta Ave., Spokane WA 99207-5026.

Grandparents Parenting... Again... Annual subscription is $5.00. Phoenix Foundation, 1500 W. El Camino, Suite 325, Sacramento, CA 95833. Telephone: 916-922-1615.

Your Grandchild. Bimonthly. To receive a sample copy, call 800-243-5201, or send email to sunielevin@aol.com

Online Publications

Are You Raising Your Grandchildren? by Marianne Takas.
http://www.fosterparents.com/index30raisinggrch.html

The Grandparent Guidebook.
http://gfn1.genesee.freenet.org/p90/Grandparents/index.htm

Grandparenting.
http://ohioline.ag.ohio-state.edu/hyg-fact/5000/5213.html

Grandparents as Parents: A Primer for Schools.
http://ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1996/dr-gra96.html

A Grandparents' Guide for Family Nurturing and Safety, by T. Berry Brazelton and Ann Brown of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/grand/grand.htm

It's Not the Same the Second Time Around: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, by Renee S. Woodworth.
http://www.zerotothree.org/2nd_time.html

Respite Services to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, by Renee S. Woodworth.
http://www.chtop.com/archfs45.htm

Secrets of Good Grandparenting, by Physicians of the Geisinger Health System.
http://www.geisinger.edu/ghs/pubtips/G/Grandparenting.htm

Things Grandparents, Neighbors, and Concerned Citizens Can Do to Improve Education.
http://www.summit96.ibm.com/perspectives/citizenslist.html

Organizations

AARP Grandparent Information Center
601 E St., NW
Washington, DC, DC 20049
Telephone: 202-434-2296
Fax: 202-434-6466

Alliance of Grandparents Against SIDS Tragedy
Telephone: 800-793-SIDS
Email: MURRAYEILE@aol.com

Caring Grandparents of America
400 Seventh St., NW, Suite 302
Washington, DC 20004-2206
Telephone: 202-783-0952

Foundations for Grandparenting
5 Casa del Oro Lane
Santa Fe, NM 87505
Email: gpfound@trail.com

Grandparents Reaching Out (GRO)
Mildred Horn
141 Glen Summer Rd.
Holbrook, NY 11741
Telephone: 516-472-9728

National Coalition of Grandparents, Inc.
137 Larkin St.
Madison, WI 53705
Telephone: 608-238-8751

Sources

Landry-Meyer, Laura, & Fournier, Karen. (1997). *Grandparents raising grandchildren* (Family...The Strongest Link. Family Life Month Packet 1997) [Fact Sheet]. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Extension.

U.S. Census Bureau. (1998). *Facts for Grandparent's Day* [Online]. Available: http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/fs97-09.html [1998, January 16].

Woodworth, Renee S. (1995). You're not alone... You're one in a million. *Child Welfare, 75*(5), 619-635.

Prepared for *Parent News* by Debbie Reese.

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Of Interest

"The Social Context of Education"

"Today, of the 4 million babies born each year [in the United States], nearly 1 out of 8 is born to a teenage mother, 1 out of 4 to a mother with less than a high school education, almost 1 out of 3 to a mother who lives in poverty, and 1 out of 4 to an unmarried mother."

These statistics and others can be found in "The Social Context of Education," one of four essays based on *The Condition of Education* (1997) published over the summer by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). *The Condition of Education* is an annual, Congressionally mandated report that presents key data analyses measuring the health of education, monitoring important developments in the education system, and showing trends in major aspects of education. The other three essays are described below:

"Women in Mathematics and Science" reviews data on women's progress in mathematics and science achievement, as well as attitudes, course-taking patterns, and college majors. It also looks at earnings differences between women and men who majored in math and science in college. (URL: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs97/97982.html)

"Public and Private Schools: How Do They Differ?" examines two fundamental differences between public and private schools: their sources of support and the role of choice in determining where students go to school. It also describes differences in academic programs and support services. (URL: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs97/97983.html)

"Postsecondary Persistence and Attainment" addresses how students' enrollment choices are related to their postsecondary persistence and attainment. It takes into account such factors as degree objective, type of institution attended, timing of enrollment, enrollment intensity and continuity, transfer, financial aid receipt, and student employment. (URL: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs97/97984.html)

Statistics from "The Social Context of Education" are provided below. (URL: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs97/97981.html)

Examples from "The Social Context of Education"

Poverty and Preschool

In 1995, 3- and 4-year-olds from families who were classified as poor (a measure of a family's composition and income) were less likely to be enrolled in preprimary education than 3- and 4-year-olds from families who were classified as nonpoor (24 and 52% compared to 42 and 64%, respectively).

Single-Parent Families

In 1995, 3- to 5-year-olds living with two biological or adoptive parents were more likely to have been read to three or more times a week, to have been told a story once a week, or to have visited the library in the previous month than 3- to 5-year-olds living with one biological or adoptive parent. Moreover, first- and second-graders aged 6–8 living with one biological or adoptive parent were more likely to experience academic problems and to have their parents report that they were academically below the middle of their class than those students living with two biological or adoptive parents.

Income and College

High school graduates from low-income families were more likely to go directly to college in 1995 than in 1972. Still, in 1995, 34% of high school graduates from low-income families went directly to college, compared to 83% of those from high-income families.

Examples from Changes in the Social Background of Children

Racial and Ethnic Diversity

Racial and ethnic diversity has increased substantially in the United States in the last two decades and is projected to increase even more in the decades to come. In 1995, 67% of U.S. children aged 5–17 were white, 15% were black, 13% were Hispanic, and 5% were Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Alaskan Native. Between 2000 and 2020, the number of minority children aged 5–17 is projected to grow much faster than the number of white children. Between 2000 and 2020, it is projected that there will be 61% more Hispanic children aged 14–17 and 47% more Hispanic children aged 5–13. The numbers of Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Alaskan Native children aged 14–17 is projected to increase by 73%, while the number of those children aged 5–13 is projected to grow by 67%. In contrast, between 2000 and 2020, the number of white children aged 5-13 is projected to decrease by 11%, and the number of white children aged 14–17 is projected to decrease by 10%.

Difficulty Speaking English

Between 1979 and 1989, the percentage of children aged 5–17 in the United States who spoke a non-English language at home and who had difficulty speaking English increased from 3 to 5% and remained at 5% between 1989 and 1995. Hispanic children were more likely to have difficulty speaking English than their white or black peers. In 1995, 31% of Hispanic children spoke a non-English language at home and had difficulty speaking English, compared to 1% each of black and white children. The percentage of Hispanic children who spoke a non-English language at home and who had difficulty speaking English increased slightly between 1979 and 1995.

Children and Poverty

The proportion of children under 18 who lived in families with incomes below the poverty level *decreased substantially* during the 1960s and then rose from 1970 to 1983. Between 1983 and 1995, the poverty rate for children fluctuated between 19 and 22%. Throughout the period, minority children were more likely to live in poverty than white children. In 1995, both black and Hispanic children (42 and 39%, respectively) were more than twice as likely as white children (16%) to live in poverty. Children living with two married parents were also much less likely to live below the poverty level than children living only with their mother (6% of children compared to 32%).

Poverty in United States

The percentage of children living below the poverty line, adjusted for the impact of taxes and governmental transfers on income, suggests how effective government fiscal policies are at reducing income inequalities and poverty in a society. Among countries with data available, the United States was the only wealthy industrialized country to have double-digit child poverty rates (20.4% in 1986) after adjusting for taxes and governmental transfers. The post-transfer poverty rates for children in the United States were between 2 and 7 times higher than comparable rates in Canada, France, former West Germany, and the United Kingdom.

Children in Single-Parent Families

In 1994, 25% of children under age 18 lived in single-parent families, while 11% did so in 1970. Between 1970 and 1994, the percentage of black children living in a single-parent family nearly doubled. In 1994, 60% of black children lived in single-parent families compared to 19% of white children and 29% of Hispanic children.

Minority Students and High-Poverty Students

In the 1993-94 school year, 27% of white students were in schools with a high-poverty rate compared to 65% of black and Hispanic students, 37% of Asian/Pacific Islander students, and 57% of American Indian/Alaskan Native students.

Examples from Learning Environment in High- and Low-Poverty Schools

Misbehavior

Teachers in high-poverty schools were more likely than their counterparts in low-poverty schools to report that student misbehavior (e.g., noise, horseplay, or fighting in the halls, cafeteria, or student lounge) in their school interfered with their teaching (18 and 8%, respectively).

Absenteeism and Tardiness

In the 1990-91 school year, the reported percentage of secondary students absent on a typical day was higher in high-poverty public schools (10%) than in low-poverty public schools (7%). Secondary teachers in high-poverty schools were more than twice as likely as secondary teachers in low-poverty public schools to report that student absenteeism and tardiness were serious problems in their schools.

Parent Involvement

In the 1993-94 school year, public school teachers from high-poverty schools were three times more likely than their counterparts in low-poverty schools to report that lack of parental involvement was a serious problem in their schools (38 compared to 12%).

Verbal Abuse and Disrespect for Teachers

In the 1993-94 school year, public school teachers in high-poverty schools were more than twice as likely to report that verbal abuse and student disrespect for teachers were serious problems at their school than their counterparts in low-poverty schools.

Physical Conflicts and Weapons

There has been an increase in the percentage of public school teachers who, between the 1987-88 and 1993-94 school years, felt that physical conflicts and weapons possession were moderate or serious problems in their schools. This concern is reflected in the views of students as well as teachers. In 1993, 50% of students reported using some sort of strategy to avoid harm at schools. Black and Hispanic students were more likely to have reported using such a strategy than were white students.

In the 1993-94 school year, 43% of public school teachers in high-poverty schools reported that physical conflicts among students were a moderate or serious problem in their schools; this was more than twice the percentage of their counterparts in low-poverty schools who reported that physical conflicts were a moderate or serious problem (19%). Of public school teachers in high-poverty schools, 13% reported that weapons possession was a moderate or serious problem in their school, compared to 7% of teachers in low-poverty schools.

Internet Access

In 1996, Internet access was available in about half (53%) of the schools in which 71% or more students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch programs and in 58% of schools in which 31 to 70% of students were eligible. In comparison, 72% of schools with 11 to 30% of students eligible for the lunch program had Internet access, and 78% of those with less than 11% of students with free or reduced-price lunch eligibility were connected to the Internet.

Teacher Salaries

In the 1993-94 school year, public school teachers in low-poverty schools earned 28% more in total school earnings than did public school teachers in high-poverty schools ($45,547 versus $35,496, respectively). Teachers in high-poverty schools were also less likely to be satisfied with their salaries than teachers in low-poverty schools.

For more information:

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Source

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Parent News for February 1998

Of Interest

Children as Activists

Social movements often begin with ordinary people taking a stand against injustice. This article will look at three instances in which children took an activist stand again injustice.

At Monroe High School in Los Angeles, California, students persuaded the school board to stop purchasing soccer balls produced in Pakistan. The balls are stitched together by about 10,000 children, all under the age of 14. The children are paid 60 cents for each ball, which is sold here for as much as $50. The Monroe High School student protest grew, until soccer ball manufacturers, including Nike, Adidas, Reebok, and 53 others, joined with the International Labor Organization and UNICEF to sign an agreement to eliminate child labor in the production of soccer balls.

In Modesto, California, Elisa Rockwell, a fourth-grade student, read a brochure sent to her parents about Nike shoes. The brochure stated that Indonesian workers are paid 4 cents for each pair of shoes they make. The shoes retail in the United States for up to $140. Elisa asked her parents to make 30 copies of the brochure, which she distributed to her classmates during show-and-tell. She has been an invited speaker at local classrooms, has written articles for the local newspaper, and has formed a group called "Just Say No to Nike."

Sixteen-year-old Patricia Soto, a Los Angeles teen, began protesting GUESS when her mother, an employee of GUESS, told her that employees were forming a union so they could be paid a fair wage, overtime when merited, and benefits. Soto took part in rallies against sweatshops and child labor, and has persuaded her friends to stop buying GUESS products.

Seventh-grade student Rylie Jones wrote to the Disney Company protesting the treatment of workers in Haiti, who are paid 28 cents an hour to make Pocahontas and Mickey House shirts. The National Labor Committee is critical of work conditions of people who produce Disney products, but Disney contends they are following applicable laws.

There is considerable debate on whether or not children should be encouraged to take an activist role in social justice issues. A growing interest in equity and cultural diversity is evidenced by curricula that help children develop skills they need to be critical consumers of commercially produced materials.

Source

Delucio-Brock, Jeff. (1997, November/December). Shopping with a conscience: Kids push for fair treatment for the workers who make their gear. *Children's Advocate, 25*(6), 3.

Parent News for February 1998

Of Interest

Children's Humor

"We love to laugh! Loud and long and clear!" sings Bert in Disney's *Mary Poppins*.

We all seem to recognize that laughter is important and healthy, not just for adults, but for children as well. Parents patiently and joyfully listen to their children's jokes but do not often reflect on the development of a sense of humor.

According to Dr. Alan J. Fridlund, an associate professor of psychology at the University of California at Santa Barbara, humor develops in stages. At around 3 months of age, a baby develops the ability to laugh, and parents typically try to make their babies laugh by tickling them. Laughter is described by Robert R. Provine, a researcher at the University of Maryland, as a series of short vowel-like notes repeated (ha-ha-ha, but not ha-ho-ha) about every 210 milliseconds. Babies often respond with laughter to roughhousing and peek-a-boo games. They also laugh at visual puns, such as when the parent puts a diaper on his or her own head. When they become vocal, babies and toddlers delight in audio puns as they play with language, for example, saying "moomoo" instead of "mama" (Clay, 1997).

In preschool and early elementary grades, children enjoy jokes identified as "prosocial." Essentially, these are knock-knock jokes and "why did the chicken cross the road" jokes that conform to society's standards of politeness and decorum.

Socha and Kelly (1994) conducted an analysis of pre-K through eighth-grade children's humor and found that it changes from prosocial to antisocial in content at around fourth grade. No longer do they tell "clean" jokes; they begin to indulge in "dirty" jokes that are impolite, racially or sexually based, and intended to make fun of someone else's weaknesses. Interestingly, the researchers found this behavior to be more typical of boys than girls, and speculate that it may be due to a gender difference in socialization. They suggest that, in general, girls may be socialized to be caring individuals, while boys may be socialized to be competitive and aggressive. Brown (1993) found similar gender differences and speculates that boys engage in more humor in their social interactions than girls.

In conclusion, it is important to note that researchers believe humor is essential for healthy cognitive, physical, social, and emotional growth. While humor and laughter are an integral part of the daily interactions of most people, research is ongoing on what children identify as funny, and why they deem it so.

Sources

Brown, Ivan. (1993). Young children's explanations of pictorial humor: A preliminary study. *Early Child Development and Care, 93,* 35-40.

Clay, Rebecca A. (1997, September). Why are knock-knock jokes so funny to kids? *APA Monitor, 28*(9), 17.

Socha, Thomas J., & Kelly, Brian. (1994). Children making "fun": Humorous communication, impression management, and moral development. *Child Study Journal, 24*(3), 237-252.

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Of Interest

Children's Books

The ERIC system offers documents called "Information Guides" on a broad range of topics related to education. Of relevance to children's literature is an ERIC Info Guide called "Children's Literature" written by Sue A. Clary in 1994 (updated on November 15, 1995, by Twana Weiler). This online info guide contains links to many Web sites about children's literature. It is available online at:

http://ericir.syr.edu/Virtual/InfoGuides/Alphabetical_List_of_InfoGuides/Childrens_Lit-11.95.html

Below is a list of children's books related to the following topics: Children's humor and grandparents.

Children's Humor

101 Cat and Dog Jokes, by Katy Hall, Lisa Eisenberg, Kathy Hall (Published in 1990 by Schocken Books). All ages.

500 Hilarious Knock-Knock Jokes for Kids, by Dora Wood (Published in 1993 by Ballantine Books). Ages 9-12.

Baseball Jokes and Riddles, by Matt Christopher; illustrated by Daniel Vasconcellos (Published in 1996 by Little, Brown). Ages 9-12.

Boys against Girls, by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor (Published in 1995 by Yearling Books). Ages 9-12.

Give a Dog a Bone: Stories, Poems, Jokes, and Riddles about Dogs, by Joanna Cole, Stephanie Calmenson, John Speirs (Published in 1996 by Scholastic Trade). Ages 9-12.

Grandparents

An Almost Perfect Game, by Stephen Manes (Published in 1995 by Scholastic Trade). Ages 9-12.

Fireflies for Nathan, by Shulamith Levey Oppenheim (Published in 1994 by William Morrow). Ages 4-8.

Grandma and Grandpa, by Helen Oxenbury (Published in 1993 by Puffin). Baby-Preschool.

Grandmother Bryant's Pocket, by Jacqueline Briggs Martin (Published in 1996 by Houghton Mifflin). Ages 4-8.

Robert Lives with His Grandparents, by Martha Whitmore Hickman (Published in 1995 by A. Whitman). Ages 4-8.

The Trees of the Dancing Goats, by Patricia Polacco (Published in 1997 by Simon & Schuster). Ages 4-8.

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Of Interest

The Importance of Family Meals

A recent issue of the American Psychological Association's publication*APA Monitor* reported that family meals may prevent teen problems. Psychologists Blake Sperry Bowden and Jennie M. Zeisz studied teenagers and categorized them as either well adjusted or not well adjusted. The adjusted children were less likely to take drugs or be depressed, were more motivated at school, and had better relationships with their peers. These children ate dinner with their families an average of five days a week. The nonadjusted teens ate a meal with their families only three days a week.

These findings led the researchers to conclude that family mealtimes are strongly related to the development of a well-adjusted teenager. However, they do not know exactly what aspect of the mealtime is key to preventing adjustment problems.

Source:

Family meals may prevent teen problems. (1997, October). *APA Monitor, 28*(10), 8.

Also see:
"Healthy Eating Habits for Toddlers and Teens" March 1997 *Parent News*

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Parent News for February 1998

Of Interest

Understanding Parent Involvement from a Parent's Perspective

by Dawn Ramsburg

Continued research on parent involvement shows that parents who are involved in their child's education can improve their child's chances of succeeding in school (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Yet, in many schools, the most that is asked of parents is that they be aware of what is going on at school, that they attend events in which their child is participating, or that they make sure that their child is completing his or her schoolwork. While these activities have been found to yield benefits, research indicates that parents who are given strategies and home-learning activities for use with their children make the greatest contributions to their children's education (Barclay & Boone, 1996/1997).

Although having such information on what type of involvement leads to positive educational outcomes for children is important, two researchers recently sought to go beyond exploring the relationship between parent involvement and children's educational outcomes to instead explore what leads parents to get involved in the first place. In their article appearing in the spring 1997 issue of *Review of Educational Research*, Kathleen Hoover-Dempsey and Howard Sandler reviewed psychological theory and research to understand why parents become involved in their children's elementary and secondary education.

In their review, these researchers defined parent involvement as:

- home-based activities such as helping with homework, discussing school events, and providing enrichment activities related to current school topics; and
- school-based activities such as driving on field trips, attending conferences, and volunteering at school.

Using this definition, they found that there were three factors that influence parents' decisions about being part of their children's schooling:

- having beliefs about what is important, necessary, and permissible for them to do with and for their children (their parental role in their children's education);
- the extent to which parents believe they can have a positive effect on their children's education (sense of efficacy); and
- the parents' perceptions that their children want them to be involved and that the school welcomes them.

In terms of the first factor found to influence parents' decisions to be involved, the evidence suggests that it is the parents' ideas about child development (what the child is capable of learning), child rearing (parenting), and their appropriate roles in supporting the child's education at home (what they should be expected to do) that are influential in parents' decisions about being involved (Hoover-Dempsey &

Sandler, 1997). That is to say, if parents believe that it is appropriate and expected of them be involved, then they are more likely to participate; whereas parents who do not view involvement as their responsibility or as something expected of them will be less likely to be involved in their children's education.

The second factor that influences the decision to be involved is based on how much parents believe they can affect their children's education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Here, the research suggests that the stronger the belief of having an impact on their children's education, the more likely it is that the parent will decide to be involved. In contrast, parents with a low sense of efficacy will likely choose not to be actively involved because they believe they will not be able to have an impact on their children's education.

The third factor found to influence parent's decisions about involvement relates to whether parents believe that their children want them involved, in addition to feeling that the school welcomes them (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). If parents feel their children as well as the school welcome their involvement, they will likely be more involved.

This model of parent involvement asserts that parents decide to become involved in their children's education if they view involvement as part of their parenting role, if they believe that they can help their children succeed in school, and if they receive invitations for involvement from their children and their children's school. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) argue, however, that parent involvement efforts should be grounded in the knowledge that parents' beliefs about their roles in children's schooling and their effectiveness in helping their children succeed should be used as the primary points of entry into increased involvement.

Having developed this model of the factors that influence parents' decisions to be involved in their children's education, these authors go on to explore how parents choose specific involvement activities once they decide to become involved. They found that a parents' choices are shaped by the following factors:

- the parents' perceptions of their own skills, interests, and abilities;
- the parents' other demands on their time and energy; and
- the parents' past experiences with involvement opportunities.

For example, parents who believe they are good cooks will likely volunteer to bake items for a class party, while parents who do not like to be in large groups of children will likely not volunteer to help out in the classroom. Similarly, parents who work the evening shift will likely not be able to attend school events scheduled at night, while parents who are at home during the day may volunteer to go along on field trips. Likewise, parents who are greeted by the principal by first name at a school function will be more likely to attend future events than parents who do not feel as though their presence is welcomed or acknowledged.

Drawing on this model of what leads parents to choose to become involved in their children's education as well as other resources, the following strategies are offered as ways to improve parental involvement in schools:

Provide teachers with in-service opportunities to overcome one of the most common barriers to a home-school relationship--lack of knowledge or skill in working with parents. At one school, monthly coffee hours are offered as a vehicle for in-service sessions led by the principal, who has either reviewed the most recent research or attended an in-service training session (Barclay & Boone, 1996/1997). Following in-service training, the teachers feel empowered to develop their own strategies for implementing the ideas presented. Upon receiving positive feedback from the principal as well as observing positive effects in their classrooms, the teachers assumed greater responsibility for continuing their own professional development by attending workshops, reading, and sharing ideas with other teachers. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) also recommend providing teachers with time during the week to interact with parents.

Establish a welcoming school climate. Although research indicates that parents do care about their children and do want to be involved in their children's education, some parents have developed negative associations with school (e.g., the parents may have had behavioral difficulties or were not very successful in school). To overcome some of these negative reactions, Barclay and Boone (1996/1997) recommend:

- Displaying welcoming signs at school entrances rather than those that read "STOP! ALL VISITORS MUST REPORT TO THE OFFICE."
- Making sure parents can find their way around the school and to their children's classrooms.
- Speaking to parents in words they can understand (i.e., avoid jargon).
- Asking parents for their opinions and ideas as well as assistance with home-learning activities.
- Communicating to parents an interest in their children and sharing successes as well as problems in both academic and social areas.

Establish parent involvement policies that reflect a commitment to building strong relationships with all families and provide an action plan with clear goals and objectives for building and maintaining a comprehensive parent involvement program (Barclay & Boone, 1996/1997). The written policies serve to "legitimize" the parent involvement program and help both the educational staff and parents better understand the roles parents will play in education. Written policies are especially important because research shows that parents and teachers often disagree on how parents should be involved (Barclay & Boone, 1996/1997).

In addition, it is important that the goals and mission reflect an endorsement of parent involvement by the community. For example, one goal can be for employers to provide parents with time to attend school-related activities (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). This policy has been established by one employer in Vermont who provides parents with the first day of school off as a paid company holiday so that they can be involved in their children's education. According to Terry Ehrich, the chief executive officer of Hemmings Motor News, while it cost him $500 to publicize the benefit in addition to the employees' salaries, the benefits are priceless because he believes that school participation will translate into better-educated future workers and current employees who are able to concentrate on their work ("Firm Makes First Day," 1997). First-day activities often include teachers informing parents of what their children will be expected to learn during the year as well as letting parents attend classes with their children. This practice allows parents to be involved before any problems occur.

In addition to this benefit, Ehrich also allows parents two paid days a year to go to school as parents or mentors in the classroom. This policy is especially worthwhile because employees can use the time as full days or in increments of as little as two hours, which gives them 16 opportunities to be involved ("Firm Makes First Day," 1997).

Involve families in curricular activities. Research finds that parents are less apprehensive and more supportive when the school tries to help them understand the "hows" and "whys" of new teaching techniques and curricular innovations (Barclay & Boone, 1996/1997). Parents can also be involved as resource persons, audience members, and helpers during theme units.

Provide administrative support. Without the active support of the district and school leadership, involvement of parents in effective ways will not occur. Administration can provide funding, necessary program materials, equipment, supplies, meeting space, and the designation of specific individuals who will carry out program tasks. In addition, the administration may want to install telephone lines in classrooms so that parents and teachers can communicate in a more direct and timely manner (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

Additional Resources

The Department of Education's Partnership for Family Involvement in Education has developed a handbook called "A Compact for Learning." Print copies are available from Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, 600 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-8173; telephone: 800-USA-LEARN. This publication will also be posted on the Internet soon at: http://www.ed.gov/PFIE/titlei.html

Family Involvement in Children's Education: Successful Local Approaches
http://www.ed.gov/pubs/FamInvolve/

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education
http://www.ed.gov/PFIE/index.html

Sources

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Of Interest

Security Blankets and Doctor Visits

A visit to the doctor often provokes anxiety for children who are afraid of medical exams. Researchers at the University of Wisconsin and a pediatrician at the Milwaukee Medical Clinic have been observing 3-year-olds during routine medical examinations to see if security blankets helped reduce children's stress during the exam.

Sixty-four families participated in the study. Parents identified their children as either attached or nonattached to a security blanket. Each child was randomly assigned to one of these exam situations: (1) mother only, (2) security blanket only, (3) mother and security blanket both present, or (4) neither mother nor security blanket present. Children's level of upset was noted during the exam, along with heart rate and blood pressure.

The researchers found that children who are attached to a security blanket get through the medical exam with little distress if they are allowed to keep their security blanket with them. Having both, the mother and the security blanket, did not markedly decrease the level of distress, and in some cases increased the stress level.

Conflicting schedules sometimes mean that a mother is not able to take her child for a doctor appointment. In these situations, Dr. Carl Eisenberg, the pediatrician participating in the study, suggests that children who are attached to a security blanket keep the blanket with them during the exam.

Source

American Psychological Association. (1997). *Security blankets can substitute for mom during a child's routine medical exam.* [Online]. Available: http://www.apa.org/releases/blanket.html [1998, January 19].

Security blankets can help during medical exams. (1997, September). *APA Monitor, 28*(9), 10.

Prepared for Parent News by Debbie Reese.

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

Serving Families

Parent Services Project (PSP), the first comprehensive program of resources and mental health activities for parents offered at child care centers in the San Francisco Bay area, has expanded to centers in six states, serving over 19,000 families. This report describes the program's history, aims, and achievements, along with specific activities, strategies, and principles that have been developed and refined during PSP's 17 years of existence. The report's first chapter, "Activities," is divided according to type of service and includes samples of how PSP agencies around the country implement the services. Activities are "family fun," "adults only," "parents' time off," "for many cultures," "involving men," "sick child care," and "parent options fund." The descriptions conclude with tips based on the personal experiences of PSP staff and parents, which can help smooth the wrinkles out of initiating a new activity. The second chapter, "Organizing a PSP Program," describes the behind-the-scenes elements of PSP: how to ensure that parents get opportunities to develop leadership skills; how to staff a PSP program and then how to give staff the attention they need; how to deal with tough issues that can wreak havoc if left unattended; and how to build a coalition of PSP agencies. Contains 14 references. (Cost: $10, plus $3 shipping for book rate, $5 shipping for UPS.) PS026065

Study Center Press
P.O. Box 425646
San Francisco, CA 94142-5646
Telephone: 888-281-3757
Fax: 415-626-7276

Children, Youth and Family Issues. 1996 State Legislative Summary. A Publication of the Children and Families Program

This book is a compilation of summaries of newly enacted state legislation affecting children and families. It documents legislative activity, emerging trends, and innovative policies in the states, providing information essential to effective policymaking. Part 1 describes the National Conference of State Legislatures' Children and Families Program. The bulk of the book provides summaries of state legislation in the following areas: (1) child abuse and neglect, including background checks, prevention and treatment, registries and records, and sexual offender registries; (2) child care and early childhood education, including regulation and licensing, child care in public schools, and support for providers; (3) child mental health; (4) child support enforcement, including court procedures, enforcement techniques, interstate enforcement, and paternity; (5) child welfare, including adoption, family preservation services and permanency plans, foster care, and termination of parental rights; (6) family law, focusing on custody and visitation and domestic law; (7) general legislation related to children, youth, and families; (8) juvenile justice, including financing, jurisdiction, procedures, and weapons offenses; (9) substance abuse and control, including prevention, education, and tobacco use control; (10) welfare reform and public assistance, including eligibility, employment-related policies, family caps, child exclusion, fraud, teen parents, and time limits; and (11) youth at risk, including missing and homeless children, school drop-outs, suspension, school safety, and truancy. Within each category, legislation is listed alphabetically according to state. (Item No. 6136, Cost: $25, plus $4 shipping and handling. Residents in Colorado must add 7.3% sales tax and residents in District of Columbia must add 6% sales tax.) PS025950

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Internet: http://www.ncsl.org

The New Welfare Law and Vulnerable Families: Implications for Child Welfare/Child Protection Systems. Children and Welfare Reform Issue Brief 3

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 can have a major impact on the health and development of young children living in poverty. This report examines the potential impact of Public Law 104-193 on vulnerable families already in or at risk of entering the child welfare/child protection systems. The report includes an overview of the challenges states face; questions for state legislators, policymakers, and advocates to consider in developing and implementing their state welfare strategies; and a detailed analysis of the provisions of the federal law most likely to affect vulnerable children and families. Several areas of possible impact are discussed, including: (1) the loss of income or supports related to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families resulting in an increase in families being unable to provide basic food and shelter for their children, causing neglect and homelessness; (2) increased stress on vulnerable families leading to abuse and other forms of maltreatment; (3) loss of Supplemental Security Income benefits for children with disabilities resulting in inability to maintain children at home; (4) decreased access to crisis intervention services for families in need; (5) new pressures on kinship foster care; (6) increased difficulty in meeting family reunification permanency goals; and (7) new pressure on youth aging out of the foster care system. A framework for analyzing the implications of 15 issues related to the new welfare law for child welfare/child protection systems is presented in a tabular format. Contains 13 references. (Cost: $5.) PS025943

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New York, NY 10032
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Fax: 212-544-4200
Internet: http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/

Serving Teen Parents in a Welfare Reform Environment

States are encouraged to use the opportunity and flexibility provided by the Personal Responsibility and

Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to design comprehensive programs to help teen parents become economically self-sufficient. This report examines how welfare reform has changed the environment for teen parents dependent on welfare. The report presents research findings on the costs of supporting teen parents and the benefits of delaying childbirth, and summarizes the provisions of the new legislation that relate directly to teen parents and state services for this population. The report then presents the components of a comprehensive policy for teen parents based on recommendations of researchers, state program administrators, direct service providers, and policymakers who met in 1996 to discuss the impact of the new welfare legislation on teen parents. The role of state governors in developing an effective and comprehensive teen parent policy is also explored. The report's four appendices include summaries of findings from evaluations of teen parent programs, acknowledgment of state experimentation in serving teen parents, a listing of the participants in the policymaking meeting, and a listing of information resources. PS025968

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Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Resources for Parents

Book Summaries and Reviews

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1. *Head Start Success Stories: Accounts of Personal Achievements.* (1995). National Head Start Association, Department 899, Alexandria, VA 22334-0899; telephone: 800-687-5044 (Catalog No. P125; members, $20, plus $4 shipping; nonmembers, $25, plus $6 shipping. Make check, money order, or purchase order payable to NHSA. VISA and MasterCard accepted).

This publication presents a collection of true stories that demonstrate the ways in which children's, parent's, and staff's lives have been enriched as a result of their involvement with Project Head Start. The stories describe remarkable achievements, often made in the face of great disadvantages and difficult circumstances, that illustrate, through real-life situations, Head Start's benefits to children, families, and communities. Each success story includes the name, address, and phone number of the individual profiled. The contact person, his or her title, address, and phone number follow. Finally, the individual's accomplishments and the role Head Start played in his or her life and success are summarized. The first section of the collection consists of 135 Head Start graduate success stories and lists the role Head Start played in their successful education. The second section consists of 170 parent success stories and shows the importance of the support and assistance Head Start parents received. The third section consists of 136 staff success stories and shows the success of Head Start volunteers and employees. The fourth section consists of 126 testimonials from persons involved in a variety of ways with the Head Start Program. PS025997

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2. Weston, Denise Chapman; Weston, Mark S. (1996). *Playwise: 365 Fun-Filled Activities for Building Character, Conscience, and Emotional Intelligence in Children.* Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam Books, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016; (U.S., $15.95; Canada, $21.50).

Noting that we are raising our children in a morally ambiguous world and we have to do more than just discipline them and hope for the best, this book is a manual for raising children who are emotionally and intellectually capable and confident by means of play activities that imbue a sense of right and wrong. Each chapter of the manual begins with a straightforward introduction about what parents need to know to understand what is important about the character skill being discussed. Each chapter also contains between 15 and 40 character-building activities. Throughout the book, true stories are interspersed to illustrate important points. Part one (chapters one through five) describes the five foundations of character including: (1) knowledge and awareness, (2) inspiration and modeling, (3) stability and balance, (4) unconditional love and acceptance, and (5) family and community connections. Part two (chapters six through twelve) describes the following character skills: (1) personal potential, (2) social harmony, (3) self-awareness, (4) sensibility, (5) happiness, (6) resolution, (7) resourcefulness, and (8) humanity. The first appendix provides a list by chapter of children's books that enhance the development of the skills addressed in the chapter. The second appendix consists of a problem-solving worksheet. The third appendix lists by type more than 450 skills, talents, and abilities in children. The final appendix is a listing of special resources of high-quality toys, play supplies, videos, books, and music that enhance children's problem-solving skills. PS025994

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3. Staso, William H. (1997). ***Brain under Construction: Experiences that Promote the Intellectual Capabilities of Young Toddlers. Book Two of a Series: 8 to 18 Months.*** **Great Beginnings Press, P.O. Box 2187, Orcutt, CA 93457; telephone: 310-598-7675, 805-937-9051 ($19.95, plus $2.25 for surface shipping or $3.50 per book for airmail; California residents add $1.55 sales tax).**

This resource for parents and other caretakers for use with infants from 8 to 18 months provides a synthesis of research on early brain development and objective oriented instruction as the basis for activities that promote intellectual development. Part 1 of the book provides an overview of early development, discusses general ways of enhancing infants' and toddlers' thinking abilities and memory, and suggests general ideas and specific activities for enhancing sensory input, reception, and awareness (including language, perception, emotions, and attention), information processing (thinking), and output (motor or language response) for infants in the 8- to 12-month age frame and those in the 13- to 18-month age frame. Part 2 provides theoretical and research information on brain development, the types of information caregivers should provide toddlers, and the manner in which information should be presented, and it presents a four-level model of cognitive functioning that provides the basis for activities in Part 1. An appendix discusses academic readiness and the importance of having fun with children. Contains 33 references. PS025972

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4. Staso, William H. (1995). ***What Stimulation Your Baby Needs to Become Smart. The First of a Series: Birth to Eight Months (A Program of Ideas Based on Current Research Findings that Can Really Make a Difference in Your Baby's Life*****). Great Beginnings Press, P.O. Box 2187, Orcutt, CA 93457; telephone: 310-598-7675, 805-937-9051 ($19.95, plus $2.25 for surface shipping or $3.50 per book for airmail; California residents add $1.55 sales tax).**

This resource for parents uses a workbook format to provide specific ideas for parents and other caretakers to use with infants from birth to 8 months. Suggested activities are based on an understanding of how the brain develops during infancy and the types of stimulation that promote neural efficiency. The book begins with a discussion of parent beliefs and brain development from birth through 7 months. The remainder of the book is organized according to 4 age levels: birth to 4 weeks, 4 to 12 weeks, 3 to 5 months, and 6 through 7 months. Each section contains general information on development during the period in question, suggests strategies for assessment, and presents activities to facilitate sensory development, meet infants' knowledge needs, and stimulate language acquisition. Space is available for parents to record ideas, plans, and results. Six appendices provide materials that can be used for visual stimulation, ideas for mobiles, and information on recent research and theory. Contains 26 references. PS025971

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5. Schiff, Donald (Ed.); Shelov, Steven P. (Ed.). (1997). ***Guide to Your Child's Symptoms: The Official, Complete Home Reference, Birth through Adolescence.*** **American Academy of Pediatrics, Villard Books, Random House, Inc., 201 East 50 St., New York, NY 10022; Internet: http://www.randomhouse.com/ (U.S., $25; Canada, $35).**

From time to time, every parent must evaluate a child's symptoms of illness or developmental problems and decide what action to take. This book is designed to help parents distinguish minor everyday problems from more serious conditions, and to suggest a reasonable course of action. The book is divided into two major sections: an A to Z directory of the 100 or so most common childhood symptoms and an illustrated first aid manual and safety guide. There is also an extensive index. The A to Z directory, which comprises the bulk of the book, is divided into three sections according to age: early infancy, later infancy and childhood, and adolescence. In each section, the symptoms are listed alphabetically according to their common names and addressed in simple charts. Charts follow a similar form: chart title; "in general" (an introductory paragraph); "call your pediatrician if. . ."; "warning"; "questions to consider"; "if the answer is. . ."; "possible cause is. . ."; "action to take"; and illustrated boxes. The second part of the book contains a first aid section divided into two parts—"Administering First Aid: Lifesaving Techniques" and "Frequently Used First Aid Measures"—and a safety section, divided into "Guide to Safety and Prevention" and "Guide to Food Safety." PS025977

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6. Flick, Grad L. (1996). ***Power Parenting for ADD/ADHD Children: A Practical Parent's Guide for Managing Difficult Behaviors.*** **Center for Applied Research in Education, P.O. Box 430, West Nyack, NY 10994; Internet: http://www.phdirect.com ($27.95).**

Noting that the first step in dealing with an attention deficit disorder (ADD/ADHD) child's difficult behavior is to understand its origins, this book presents behavior management techniques to help parents care for their ADD child while ensuring that the child continues to develop a positive, healthy self-esteem. The guide shows how to: (1) ensure an accurate diagnosis based on history, testing, and observations; (2) understand and accept the reality of ADD/ADHD; (3) set appropriate rules and communicate effectively; (4) choose consequences that really reinforce desired behavior; (5) create and model positive behaviors; (6) remove or decrease problem behaviors; (7) work with teachers; (8) address common homework problems; (9) help overcome social problems with peers and siblings; and (10) improve poor self-concept and self-esteem often associated with ADD. The guide also includes up-to-date information on medications, educational interventions, counseling, stress management, innovative new therapies, speech and language therapy, and special support for parents. Appendices include: (1) information about the ADD Clinic in Biloxi, Mississippi, and its programs; (2) a list of facts related to ADD; (3) information for teachers; (4) forms, charts, and graphs that can help in evaluating ADD; (5) information on recommended resources for kids, teens, adults, parents, and teachers; and (6) a glossary of key terms pertaining to ADD/ADHD and related behaviors. PS025669

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Resources for Parents

Organizations

Action Alliance for Children

Action Alliance for Children is a nonprofit organization dedicated to informing and empowering people who work with and on behalf of children. The organization publishes a bimonthly newsletter, *Children's Advocate News Magazine*, and an annual multicultural calendar. Subscriptions to the newsletter are available to first-time subscribers at $12.

Contact:

Action Alliance for Children
The Hunt House
1201 Martin Luther King Jr. Way
Oakland, CA 94612-1217
Telephone: 510-444-7136

Full-Time Dads

Founded in 1991, Full-Time Dads provides networking and support for fathers who are the primary caregivers for their children. Members share information based on their personal experience as a primary caregiver. Full-Time Dads publishes a bimonthly journal.

Contact:

Full-Time Dads
c/o Stephen Harris
P.O. Box 577
Cumberland, ME 04021
Telephone: 207-829-5260

Adoptive, Foster, and Biological Parents of FAS/FAE Children

This organization functions as a support network for adoptive, foster, and biological parents of children affected by fetal alcohol syndrome or prenatal drug use. For information on establishing a local group, contact information is provided below.

Contact:

Ronnie Jacobs
Bergen County Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Inc.
P.O. Box 626
Paramus, NJ 07653
Telephone: 201-261-2183 or 201-261-1450

Parents Anonymous

Parents Anonymous is a national organization founded in 1970 to help parents who are having difficulty and would like to learn more effective ways of parenting their children.

Contact:

Parents Anonymous
675 W. Foothill Blvd., Suite 220
Claremont, CA 91711-3416
Telephone: 909-621-6184
Fax: 909-625-6304
Email: hn3831@handsnet.org

Families Anonymous

Families Anonymous is a national group founded in 1971 to provide support for individuals who are concerned about drug and related behavioral problems of friends or relatives.

Contact:

Families Anonymous
P.O. Box 3475
Culver City, CA 90231-3475
Telephone: 800-736-9805 or 310-313-5800
Fax: 310-313-6841

Family Resource Coalition of America

The Family Resource Coalition of America (FRCA) is a membership, consulting, and advocacy organization that has been advancing the movement to strengthen and support families since 1981. The family support movement and FRCA seek to strengthen and empower families and communities so that they can foster the optimal development of children, youth, and adult family members. FRCA builds networks, produces resources, advocates for public policy, provides consulting services, and gathers information to help promote the family support movement.

Contact:

Family Resource Coalition of America
20 North Wacker Dr., Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60606
Telephone: 312-341-0900
Fax: 312-341-9361
Email: frca@frca.org
Internet: http://www.frca.org/

[**Editorial Note**, June 19, 1998: The Web address for the Family Resource Coalition of America has changed. The Web address above is the correct address as of 6/19/98 and replaces the previous address in the original issue of Parent News.]

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Parent News for February 1998

Resources for Parents

Newsletters/Magazines

The Ups & Downs of Adolescence

This online newsletter is produced by the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The theme for 1998 is "Developmental Challenges of Adolescence." Newsletter articles will cover topics such as the development of autonomy, acquiring interpersonal skills, dealing with emerging sexuality, acquiring education, and resolving identity issues. Previous issues cover topics such as character, sports nutrition, responsibility, and how to talk with teenagers. For more information:

Stephen T. Russell, Ph.D.
Adolescent Development Extension Specialist
Assistant Professor of Family & Consumer Sciences
University of Nebraska–Lincoln
P.O. Box 830801
Lincoln, NE 68583-0801
Internet: http://www.ianr.unl.edu/ianr/fcs/upsdowns/index.htm

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Cooperatively Speaking

This newsletter is the official bulletin of Parent Cooperative Preschools International (PCPI). The current issue includes topics such as Reggio Emilia in America and information about various books, videos, meetings, or other PCPI business. For more information:

Parent Cooperative Preschools International
United States Office
National Cooperative Business Center
1401 New York Ave. NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005

BlackFamily Today

Published bimonthly, this magazine is provided as a resource for today's Black families. A recent issue discusses education and ways that parents can participate in their child's education as well as historical struggles of Black people to build an educational environment in Florida. Other departments include editorial viewpoints, arts, and entertainment in the Florida area. Subscription rate is $12 per year. For more information:

Sentinel Communications Co.
633 N. Orange Ave.
Orlando, FL 32801
Telephone: 407-420-6080

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Parent News for February 1998

Resources for Parents

NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: Child Rights Information Network

Description: The Child Rights Information Network is a global network of children's rights organizations seeking to support the effective exchange of information about children and their rights. The network aims to (1) support and promote the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; (2) help meet the information needs of organizations and individuals working with and for children's rights; and (3) support organizations in gathering and disseminating child rights information through training, capacity-building, and the development of electronic and non-electronic networking tools.

Address: http://www.crin.ch/

Name: National Center for Family Literacy

Description: National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) has as its mission the advancement and support of family literacy services for millions of families across the United States through programming, training, research, advocacy, and dissemination of information about family literacy. Their site provides (1) a listing of their publications; (2) a description of NCFL projects, training services, and events; and (3) links to related sources.

Address: http://www.famlit.org/

Name: Raising Today's Teens

Sponsor: Marion Foundation

Description: Raising Today's Teens is a project of the Marion Foundation, a nonprofit organization that strives to improve communications and relationships among youth and parents by implementing innovative programs that address the social, emotional, and educational issues of our society. It is a telephone support center and a private and confidential Internet counseling service open to anyone parenting a teen. The Internet site also provides a publication with the current information on how to deal more effectively with everyday teen issues.

Address: http://www.raisingtodaysteens.org/

Name: Parent Resource Network

Sponsor: Children's Defense Fund and the William Penn Foundation

Description: The Children's Defense Fund now features the Parent Resource Network. This Network contains links to a variety of national Internet sites that offer parents information on caring for their own children and on getting involved in group efforts to help children in their own communities or states. The site also contains online resources for parents.

Address: http://www.childrensdefense.org/prn.html

Name: Stand for Children

Description: Stand for Children is a national organization that encourages individuals to improve children's lives. Their mission is to identify, train, and connect local children's activists engaging in advocacy, awareness raising, and service initiatives on an ongoing basis as part of Children's Action Teams (CATs). The Web site features information on CATs as well as action sheets, resource lists, and a monthly newsletter.

Address: http://www.stand.org/index.shtml

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Resources for Parents

The Parenting Calendar

Note: NPIN now features a graphically formatted PARENTING Calendar (similar to print calendars) in order to make it easier to find and view each month's announcements and conferences. You may now download and/or print each month's calendar for your personal use. In addition, only new items from the PARENTING Calendar will now be included in Parent News. For a full listing of conferences, go to the PARENTING Calendar section of NPIN.

Conference: National Student Assistance Conference

Sponsor: Student Assistance Journal and the National Association of Leadership for Student Assistance Programs

Date: March 15-18, 1998

Place: Coronado Springs Resort, Lake Buena Vista, Florida

Description: Drug-free schools coordinators and student assistance professionals are invited to attend this 3½ day conference featuring over 30 expert presenters.

Contact:

National Student Assistance Conference
1270 Rankin #F
Troy, MI 48083
Telephone: 800-453-7733

Conference: Nevada Early Childhood Conference

Date: March 27-28, 1998

Place: Reno/Sparks Convention Center

Description: All parents are invited to attend this conference covering a broad range of informative issues and educational sessions on family, home care, administration, health, education, and safety of children. One of the keynote speakers will be Dr. James Garbarino, whose books include *Raising Children in a*

Socially Toxic Environment. Dr. Alice Honig, who has consulted for many projects for infants, young children, and parents, will also be speaking.

Contact:

Jane Hogue
Telephone: 702-784-4400 or
Jan Morrison
Telephone: 702-850-8030 Ext. 8029

Conference: Family Literacy: Building a Legacy

Sponsor: National Center on Family Literacy

Date: April 19-21, 1998

Place: Louisville, Kentucky

Description: The Seventh Annual National Conference on Family Literacy is called "Family Literacy: Building a Legacy." Featured speakers include Clifton Taulbert and J. Lawrence Aber. Sessions will cover a variety of topics.

Contact:

National Center for Family Literacy
Attn: Department C
Waterfront Plaza
325 W. Main St., Suite 200
Louisville, KY 40202-4251
Telephone: 502-584-1133
Fax: 502-584-0172
Email: tritter@famlit.org
Internet: http://www.famlit.org/ncflcon.html
(Editorial Note: As of 7/3/98, the National Center for Family Literacy's Conference Page has been discontinued, since the conference has passed.)

Conference: Planting Seeds for Tomorrow: The 1998 International Parent to Parent Conference

Date: May 29–June 1, 1998

Place: Sheraton Gateway Hotel and Georgia International Convention Center. Atlanta, Georgia

Description: This conference, held every two years, is one of the largest conferences of parents and families in the United States. For the past several years, it has also enjoyed the attendance of people representing other countries and has truly become international in its scope. The 1998 conference is expected to bring more than 2,000 people together for two and a half days to share and learn from each other about how best to support families and develop best practices for people with disabilities.

Contact:

Cathy Spraetz
Parent to Parent of Georgia
2900 Woodcock Blvd., Suite 240
Atlanta, GA 30341
Telephone: 770-451-5484
800-229-2038 (toll-free within Georgia only)
Fax: 770-458-4091
Email: conference@parenttoparentofga.org
Internet: http://www.parenttoparentofga.org/conptp.htm
(Editorial Note: As of 7/3/98, the Parent to Parent Conference Page has been discontinued, since the conference has passed.)

Conference: 102nd Annual National PTA Convention

Date: June 27-30, 1998

Place: Opryland Hotel Convention Center, Nashville, Tennessee

Description: Each year, the National PTA Convention and Exhibition serves as an important meeting ground where child advocates convene to work, share, and learn. The 1998 convention will provide (1) advanced training in leadership and program planning, (2) opportunities to network with others, (3) educational workshops on PTA and parenting issues, (4) idea-sharing activities, and (5) a keynote address from Dr. James Comer from the Yale Child Study Center.

Contact:

National PTA
Telephone: 800-307-4PTA
Email: info@pta.org
Internet: http://www.pta.org/aconvent/index.htm

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NPIN
National Parent Information Network

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  by Debbie Reese

- Community Spotlight:
  Making the First Day of School a Holiday for Parents

- Of Interest:
  - *Children Look for Help Dealing with Bullies* by Andrea Neighbours
  - *Why Are Books Such as Everyone Poops Bestsellers?*
  - *Satellite Training Sessions Offered on Children, Youth, and Family Issues*
  - *States Alter Driving Laws: Look to Parents to be Involved in Teaching Their Teens to Drive*
  - *Communicating with Your Teen*
  - *What to Expect from Your Teenagers*
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Parent News Editorial Information

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Editor: Laurel Preece
NPIN Coordinator: Anne Robertson

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Parent News for March 1998

What's New on NPIN

For a listing and description of items that are new on NPIN over the last three months, see the What's New on NPIN section on the NPIN Home Page.

What's New: Resources added to NPIN during February 1998

Several new items have been added to several topical areas in the Resources for Parents / Full Text of Parenting-Related Materials section.

In the Early Childhood: Learning section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Ready or not...Preparing young children for the classroom*
  This publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children includes suggestions for parents and schools on how to make sure that children are ready for classrooms and classrooms are ready for children. Readiness issues such as physical well-being, social and emotional maturity, language skills, problem-solving, and creative thinking are discussed.
- *Staying on Track ... As Your Child Grows & Learns*
  This Colorado Department of Education brochure is the first of two (also see "Continuing on Track...") which discuss common characteristics of children of different ages as well as age-appropriate activities for parents of young children. This brochure includes characteristics and activities for the following ages: 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, 2 years, 3 years, and 4 years. This brochure is also available in Spanish.
- *Continuing on Track ... As Your Child Grows & Learns*
  This Colorado Department of Education brochure is the second of two (also see "Staying on Track...") which discuss common characteristics of children of different ages as well as age-appropriate activities for parents of young children. This brochure includes characteristics and activities for the following ages: 5 years, 6 years, 7 years, and 8 years.
- Manténganse en el camino ... Mientras que su niño/a crece y aprende
  This Colorado Department of Education brochure is the first of two which discuss common characteristics of children of different ages as well as age-appropriate activities for parents of young children. This brochure includes characteristics and activities for the following ages: 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, 2 years, 3 years, and 4 years. This brochure is also available in English. The Spanish language follow-up brochure will be added to NPIN in March 1998.
- What Should Parents Know about Full Day Kindergarten?
  This brochure from ACCESS ERIC is based on a 1994 ERIC Digest by Dianne Rothenberg. The brochure discusses the recent trend toward full-day kindergarten and provides an overview of the characteristics of an effective full-day kindergarten program. Finally, the brochure compares research into full-day versus half-day programs and draws conclusions from the research.
- Full-Day Kindergarten Programs
  This ERIC Digest discusses the recent trend toward full-day kindergarten and provides an overview

of the characteristics of an effective full-day kindergarten program. Finally, the brochure compares research into full-day versus half-day programs and draws conclusions from the research

In the Children's Health and Nutrition section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Healthy eating from the start: Nutrition education for young children*
  This publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children includes suggestions for giving children a hands-on learning experience with good nutrition at an early age, providing them a greater chance of sustaining good dietary habits through their adulthood.

In the Children and the Media section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Helping children cope with violence*
  This publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children provides guidelines for parents to deal with violence in the media and to monitor how media violence affects their children. The guidelines are based on the book *Remote Control Childhood? Combating the Hazards of Media Culture* by Diane E. Levin.

In the Helping Children Learn at Home section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Public Library Services for Home Schooling*
  This ERIC Digest discusses the importance of public libraries as the primary educational resource available to home schoolers. Included in the digest are a brief description of home schooling, services which public libraries can provide to home schoolers, and challenges which arise in providing these services.
- *Helping with Homework: A Parent's Guide to Information Problem-Solving*
  This Digest is based on the book, *Helping With Homework: A Parent's Guide to Information Problem-Solving*, by Michael B. Eisenberg & Robert E. Berkowitz. The excerpts included in this digest discuss the "Big Six Approach" to helping children with their homework. The Big Six approach is designed to help the parent to be a "coach" while the child assumes the roles of the "thinker" and "doer" of the homework assignments.

In the Child Care (All Ages) section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Perspectives on Rural Child Care*
  This ERIC Digest suggests that child care research has traditionally been biased toward the urban (and sometimes suburban) setting. The digest addresses the particular challenges, concerns, and strengths of rural child care. Also included in the digest are implications for child care practitioners and policymakers.

In the Assessment and Testing section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- How Can I Assess the Development of My Preschooler?
  This brochure from ACCESS ERIC is based on a 1994 ERIC Digest by Lilian Katz. The brochure addresses the need of parents to track their preschooler's development. Regarding 11 different categories, the brochure discusses the typical characteristics of preschool children, based on normative scales. Some of these categories include eating habits, toilet habits, sleeping habits, friendship, and responses to authority. Finally, the brochure provides information on when parents

should intervene in their child's development.

- Assessing the Development of Preschoolers
  This ERIC Digest addresses the need of parents to track their preschooler's development. Regarding 11 different categories, the digest discusses the typical characteristics of preschool children, based on normative scales. Some of these categories include eating habits, toilet habits, sleeping habits, friendship, and responses to authority. Finally, the digest provides information on when parents should intervene in their child's development.
- La Evaluación del Desarrollo de los Alumnos Preescolares
  This Spanish Digest addresses the need of parents to track their preschooler's development. Regarding 11 different categories, the digest discusses the typical characteristics of preschool children, based on normative scales. Some of these categories include eating habits, toilet habits, sleeping habits, friendship, and responses to authority. Finally, the digest provides information on when parents should intervene in their child's development.

Reviews or summaries of the following parenting-related books were added to the Parenting Resources: Books section of NPIN:

- *Head Start Success Stories: Accounts of Personal Achievements* from the National Head Start Association
- *Playwise: 365 Fun-Filled Activities for Building Character, Conscience, and Emotional Intelligence in Children* by Denise Chapman Weston and Mark S. Weston
- *Brain under Construction: Experiences that Promote the Intellectual Capabilities of Young Toddlers. Book Two of a Series: 8 to 18 Months* by William H. Staso
- *What Stimulation Your Baby Needs to Become Smart. The First of a Series: Birth to Eight Months (A Program of Ideas Based on Current Research Findings that Can Really Make a Difference in Your Baby's Life)* by William H. Staso
- *Guide to Your Child's Symptoms: The Official, Complete Home Reference, Birth through Adolescence* by Donald Schiff (Ed.) and Steven P. Shelov (Ed.)
- *Power Parenting for ADD/ADHD Children: A Practical Parent's Guide for Managing Difficult Behaviors* by Grad L. Flick

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Information on the following parenting-related organizations was added to the Resources for Those Who Work with Parents: Organizations section of NPIN:

- Action Alliance for Children
- Full-Time Dads
- Adoptive, Foster, and Biological Parents of FAS/FAE
- Parents Anonymous
- Families Anonymous
- Family Resource Coalition of America

Information on the following parenting-related newsletters was added to the Parenting Resources: Newsletters section of NPIN:

- *The Ups & Downs of Adolescence*
- *Cooperatively Speaking*
- *BlackFamily Today*

Several new links to Internet resources were added in the Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents section.

Continue to the next article.
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Parent News for March 1998

March's Feature

Young Children and Racism

by Debbie Reese

Throughout the United States, communities are experiencing heightened levels of tension among racial groups. Canada, our neighbor to the north, is also experiencing racial tension (Esses & Gardner, 1997). Race and racism have figured prominently in news stories such as the Los Angeles riots centered around the Rodney King verdict and, later, the controversy surrounding the O.J. Simpson trial. Concerned with racism in America, in June of 1997, President Clinton established the Presidential Advisory Board on Race. The board has a four-part mission: (1) to facilitate a national dialogue on race; (2) to increase Americans' understanding of race-related issues; (3) to encourage community leaders to develop and implement innovative programs designed to ease racial tensions; and (4) to come up with solutions to problems such as discrimination in housing, health care, and the criminal justice system (Clay, 1997).

Racism is one of America's "hot-button" issues, according to Gail Wyatt, a researcher at the University of California at Los Angeles. Wyatt states that racism is an especially challenging social issue because "it calls into question the very way each of us experiences the world" (Shapiro, 1997, p. 39). The issue is not *whether* people experience racism, but *how* they experience it. Clearly, racial issues are in the forefront of our adult minds, but what about our children? What is their understanding of race? Does their understanding affect their behavior?

Although many parents believe their children are oblivious to racial differences, research indicates otherwise. Researcher Phyllis A. Katz has been conducting studies on children's development of racial attitudes for the past two decades. In a recent study, she showed 6-month-old infants several pictures of African Americans and then showed the infants a picture of a white American. The babies looked at the last picture for a significantly longer time, suggesting they were aware of the difference. (The study also included showing infants several pictures of white Americans and then showing them a picture of an African American, with the same result: the babies looked at the last picture for a significantly longer time, indicating they were aware of the difference). The study was conducted on 100 white infants and 100 African American infants, with the same results. Clearly, Dr. Katz writes, infants as young as 6 months old recognize racial cues, even before they develop language skills (Burnette, 1997).

Howard Fishbein, a researcher at the University of Cincinnati, maintains that from infancy human beings are naturally predisposed to recognize differences. He says that the ability to discern difference served ancient societies by helping them keep their guard up against outsiders who might hurt or kill them. Research indicates that by the age of 3, children develop a sense of "outsiders"—people who are different from themselves—and because of societal influence, may target those outsiders for prejudicial behaviors (Sleek, 1997).

Many parents believe children develop racial attitudes similar to those held by their parents. Some believe children learn racially tolerant behaviors by observing their parents' positive interactions with people of color and, conversely, learn intolerant behaviors when they hear their parents making negative statements about people of color or see their parents avoiding contact with people of color. Other parents believe that if they do not note differences (taking a "color-blind" stance), or if they do not make negative comments or display behaviors that suggest they wish to avoid contact with people of color, their child will not develop negative racial negative attitudes. However, research conducted by Frances Aboud and her colleagues at McGill University indicates children's racial attitudes do not necessarily reflect the attitudes of their parents (Aboud & Doyle, 1996). Aboud says that remaining silent (as in the "color-blind" stance) on racial issues suggests to children that talking about race is off limits. This silence piques a child's curiosity and can contribute to development of negative attitudes or a feeling of unease around people whose race is different from the child's.

Angela Neal-Barnett, a researcher at Kent State University, suggests there are three ways in which parents socialize their children with regard to race. In the first approach, parents directly address the realities of racism and help their children identify and feel comfortable about their own racial identity. In the second, parents view racism as a minor component in the socialization of their children and will discuss it when the children raise the issue. The third approach is one in which parents ignore racial issues and guide their children to focus on personal qualities of an individual such as confidence, ambition, and respect. This approach, which makes sense on many levels, is actually the most problematic for children's levels of anxiety. In her study, Neal-Barnett interviewed African American children who had been socialized in one of the three ways and found that children whose parents chose to ignore race and focus on personal qualities had the highest levels of anxiety in their social interactions, regardless of the race of the people with whom they were interacting (DeAngelis, 1997).

Many educators and psychologists have developed programs to address racism. Beverly Tatum and Phyllis Brown, researchers at the University of Massachusetts, have developed a program that brings a group of racially mixed children in elementary school together after school hours for a period of seven weeks. In the early weeks of the program, children are grouped by race to discuss their own identity issues. Part way through the program, children are reassigned to a racially mixed group, and discussions about racial issues continue. Parent groups meet once a month to discuss racism and learn how they can discuss racism with their children. This approach, bringing children together in small groups to work together on a specific task, is commonly known as cooperative learning. Howard Fishbein believes that this approach may be one of the best ways to help children offset their prejudices toward classmates of other races. Children come to see themselves as teammates, as "insiders" rather than "outsiders." They learn to encourage each other's participation, to listen to each other's ideas, and *to disagree with respect instead of derision*. Fishbein suggests the widespread use of this strategy may produce a generation of children who grow to adulthood actively seeking commonalities across culture and race, rather than differences (Sleek, 1997). Observations of kindergarten classrooms in which the children were from diverse racial and socioeconomic backgrounds found no episodes of interracial or intraracial tension (Holmes, 1995).

Aboud and Doyle (1996) conducted a study in which third- and fourth-grade children were paired with a friend who had a different level of prejudice and were asked to talk about race. The attitudes of children who, on a pre-test, had the highest levels of prejudice were changed most by the discussion with their friend. This finding adds to the literature that suggests that open and honest discussions of race are necessary to change negative attitudes.

Many men and women of different racial and ethnic groups fall in love and marry. Their children are multiracial. The U.S. Census Bureau indicated that in 1990, there were at least two million people who identified themselves as multiracial. These individuals may opt to identify with the race of both parents, or with one or the other at different times. Often, these children develop a feeling of being outsiders. It is crucial that parents of multiracial children engage their children in discussions of race and actively work to help them develop a strong self-esteem, according to Francis Wardle, the director of the Center for the Study of Biracial Children (Sullivan, 1998).

One way parents can open discussions with their children is by reading children's books about other cultures. In *Nappy Hair*, by Carolivia Herron, Brenda's family talks about her hair, which is the nappiest, curliest, and twistiest hair in the whole family. This book about an African American family can lead to a discussion about differences in appearance. In *Bird Talk*, by Lenore Keshig-Tobias, the discussion focuses on how a Native American family deals with a little girl's feelings when her schoolmates tease her about being Indian. In *Everybody Eats Rice*, by Norah Dooley, a young child is sent out to call her brother to dinner. She visits many homes in her neighborhood as she searches for him, and sees the ways families from different cultures prepare rice for dinner. She learns that not only Asian Americans eat rice. This book can lead to a discussion about food across cultures. Arnold Adoff's book *Black Is Brown Is Tan* is about two children in a multiracial family.

In addition to actively seeking children's books about other cultures, parents can also begin looking critically at characters in their children's favorite television programs and children's books. These characters often reflect stereotypical ways of thinking about Native Americans. For example, in *Clifford's Halloween*, Clifford the Big Red Dog is shown wearing an Indian headdress and smoking a peace pipe. Parents can open a discussion with their child and help them understand that, today, Native American children wear jeans and sneakers, ride bikes, and play computer games (Reese, 1996).

Children are not color blind; they recognize differences. Children develop racial attitudes based on their observations of their parents and society in general. Discussions about race do change attitudes. Vonnie McLoyd, at Duke University, encourages parents to begin talking honestly with their children about racial issues (Burnette, 1997).

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Parent News for March 1998

Community Spotlight

Making the First Day of School a Holiday for Parents

One town in southwest Vermont has a new twist on the concept of "school holidays." Instead of a traditional school holiday for *children*, this year 124 employers provided *employees* with time off to attend a host of events in schools throughout the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union. According to Terry Ehrich, President of the First Day Foundation, "the idea is to bring the parental, family, community-involvement-in-education theme into sharper focus at the beginning of each school year. Our aim is to begin each school year with positive relationships between teachers, parents, and students, building momentum for a three-way partnership for learning through the rest of the school year" (T. Ehrich, personal communication, January 28, 1998).

In this Community Spotlight, Mr. Ehrich describes the First Day of School Holiday concept and responds to questions about the event.

What does a First Day of School Holiday program look like?

The basic concept of the First Day of School Holiday is to:

- Let each school develop its own First Day of School program, celebration, or other activities.
- Let each employer allow time off on the First Day of School (paid time would be wonderful; unpaid time or time to be made up beforehand or afterward would be helpful) to any parent or surrogate parent who has a child in a school that has developed a First Day of School program for parents. The time off need be no more than the time the school has allotted for the program, plus travel time as necessary.

While some First Day of School programs might run an hour or two, others might run all day and into the evening. In addition, the holiday, which Ehrich describes as "a celebration of the first day of your child's future," could range from loose activities to tightly organized programs.

A possible schedule might include:

- A cavalcade of school buses and car-pool cars or vans picking up students and their parents to take them to school.
- A pancake breakfast cooked and served by the Rotarians.
- A parade through the neighborhoods near the school.
- An assembly for students, parents, and staff ("from the most senior teacher to the most junior custodian").
- Parent meetings with teachers.
- Lunch served by another service organization.
- An education fair or circus, field trips, or picnics in the afternoon.

- An evening concert by school band and choral members, plus adult musicians from the community; and just after dusk—fireworks!

How did such an idea develop?

While the First Day of School Holiday concept was tried out for the first time as a community activity on the First Day of School 1997 (late August in the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union Schools), "our encouragement of parental involvement in education has been going for nearly 15 years," says Mr. Ehrich.

At the offices of *Hemmings Motor News,* where he is the publisher and editor, every staff member has been allowed two days off with pay (which may be taken in as many as eight sessions of as few as two hours each) to go to school with their children, attend parent-teacher conferences, be otherwise involved in their children's education, or do volunteer work relating to the academic programs in their children's schools (or in nearby schools if they have no children).

Ehrich identifies a number of components as the rationale for that policy:

- Parental involvement in a child's education is said to be the most accurate predictor of that child's academic success—and everyone in our community benefits when children (tomorrow's citizens) are better educated.
- We believe that employees who come to work with unsolved personal problems on their minds are extremely unlikely to perform well at their jobs and are very likely to make mistakes that will irritate our customers and cost the company money in the long run. Therefore, we do what we can (within reason) to give employees the opportunities to deal with their personal lives in ways that allow them the satisfaction of successful problem solving. Employees then come to work prepared to focus clearly and competently on their jobs so that they can provide our customers the excellent service they deserve.
- We believe that policies such as these help employees develop positive personal morale, and that in addition to improved performance, positive morale results in less staff turnover, saving the company the costs of unnecessarily frequent recruiting, hiring, and training.
- In short, our goal is two-pronged: "a better functioning community in which to live and work and a better functioning, more profitable business."

What are some of the benefits of this program?

According to Mr. Ehrich, the most significant benefit of the First Day of School Holiday was that "when the whole community came together in support of the school, students, and family involvement in education and learning, the parents of the children who often need the most help—the parents often most intimidated by the schools and least likely to feel that they can have any positive effect on their children's education—were given the courage of 'marching with the crowd'. In this way, they could become involved as members of a mutually supportive group, rather than feeling as though they would have to make any effort towards involvement alone (a daunting prospect for those who may not have done all that well in school themselves, during their youth)."

Other benefits include:

- Parents meeting parents of their children's classmates and forming informal parent support groups.
- Parents demonstrating to their children their support of their learning and the importance they place on it.
- Enhanced employer/employee relationships when employers make it clear that they take employees'

personal lives seriously.

- Membership recruiting opportunities for PTAs and opportunities for other community members to show their appreciation for parental, family, and community support.
- Opportunities for school administrators and school boards to show school programs to their communities and to show school needs as well.

Were there other groups or businesses who supported or who did not support or who questioned the idea?

Although some businesses took more persuasion than others, eventually 124 southwest Vermont employers jumped on the bandwagon, agreeing to allow time off for parents or their staff on the First Day of School. Mr. Ehrich notes, however, that each employer made his or her own choices of how much time would be allowed (anywhere from a couple of hours to the whole day) and whether such time off would be paid time or time to be made up.

School administrators (the superintendent and most of the principals) accepted the idea quickly and (for the most part) enthusiastically. Some of the teachers were initially skeptical of the idea, feeling that "their" first day with their students was being taken away from them. However, after the actual First Day of School itself, almost all teachers were very positive about the experience. According to Mr. Ehrich, "not only did they appreciate the clear support of the community, but it was a new experience to many of them to have so many parents in the school with such positive attitudes (a welcome change from the unfortunately frequent pattern of teachers not getting to meet parents until some sort of trouble has surfaced)."

What costs and limits were involved?

The costs were practically nothing. The schools essentially did only what they usually do anyway, and such extras as picnics tended to be potluck. Employers' costs ranged from nothing beyond the minimal cost of rescheduling to cover brief absences of a few employees at the low end to paying a few hours of "benefit wages" at the high end. "A couple of my staff and I put in about 50 hours over three months writing letters, making phone calls, and writing press releases."

"Limits? As long as we don't break laws, I can't think of any limits."

Terry Ehrich is the President of First Day Foundation as well as the Publisher and Editor of Hemmings Motor News.

For more information on the First Day of School Holiday concept, contact:

First Day Foundation
P.O. Box 10
Bennington, VT 05201
Telephone: 802-447-9625
Internet: http://www.firstday.org

For more information on parent and community involvement in education, contact:

National Parent Information Network
http://npin.org

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education
http://www.ed.gov/PFIE/index.html

"America Goes Back to School" Initiative of the U.S. Department of Education
http://www.ed.gov/Family/agbts/

Alliance for Parental Involvement in Education
http://www.croton.com/allpie/

Prepared for *Parent News* by Dawn Ramsburg

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Parent News for March 1998

Of Interest

Children Look for Help Dealing with Bullies

by Andrea Neighbours

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BATON ROUGE, LA. To the seasoned bully, Scott Scribner was a walking target: He was the new kid. A seventh grader, he was a whole grade younger than the bully on his school bus. And loaded down with his lunch, backpack, and trumpet, he had little means to defend himself.

Regularly, as Scott tried to exit the New Orleans public school bus with his gear, the bully would trip him. This continued until one day he fell all the way down the front stairs of the bus.

The family struggled over how to handle the incident. "You've submitted your child to the greater structure, and the greater structure doesn't provide protection—what do you do?" Scott's father, Richard Scribner, found himself asking.1

With the level of violence in schools increasing, kids behaving more aggressively at younger ages, and more weapons appearing in schools, more people are asking the same question, says Richard Havler, professor of counselor education at Ohio University in Athens.

The news that a young girl in England recently killed herself to escape persistent bullying, and reports that Japan has experienced serious incidents of bullying over the last few years, elevate the problem to an international issue.

"People have such different ideas about what to do" on bullying, notes Nancy Mullin-Rindler at the Wellesley Center for Women at Wellesley (Mass.) College. Ms. Mullin-Rindler has worked with teachers and education experts to help develop a curriculum to teach kids how to respond to bullying.

Central to the curriculum are bystanders, who Mullin-Rindler says are also affected by bullying and very able to help diffuse it. Children are given an opportunity in class to problem-solve, act out what they to intervene. Other researchers are also working on solutions that involve bystanders.

Such approaches are welcome at a time when parents and teachers struggle with the age-old problem of bullies. Many teachers don't believe children's reports of bullying or feel a child should work out the problem on his or her own—a strategy akin to telling a sexual harassment victim to work out the problem with the harasser, Mullin-Rindler says.

Parents often don't know what to do—fight for their child, accuse the child of exaggerating, or instruct the child to work out the problem alone.

Mr. Scribner wanted to call the bully's parents, but Scott resisted until his father promised to keep his complaint anonymous. Scribner succeeded in stopping the bullying, but the incident was not without complications: The bully's parents had caller I.D., traced the call to determine who had made the complaint, and sent the police to the Scribners' house, citing harassment. Two years later, Scott's father still wonders if he did the right thing.

When a bullying situation arises, Mullin-Rindler has several suggestions for parents: "Listen and ask your child what he or she wants to happen: What support do they want from the adult? Do they want words to use on their own? Do they want parents to talk to the teacher?" She encourages parents to give kids a repertoire of responses for different situations.

Believing the Child Is Key

If a child comes to an adult for help, believe what that child is saying, she adds. "They're coming to you because they really don't know how to solve it on their own. As one kindergartner told me, 'If I knew what to do, I'd have done it myself,' " she says.

Education experts cite an imbalance of power as a reason for bullying.

Professor Havler, who has written a book on interventions for bullying and violence, believes that the middle school years are a key time for bullying as kids find a wealth of power associated with the physical, social, and emotional changes taking place within them.

Because children don't automatically know how to use this power, schools, parents, and friends must help them—bullies, victims, and bystanders—understand how to respond when power is misused.

Whither the School System?

As children continue to describe bullying incidents in their schools, many parents question whether the school system really is helping.

Marianne Lewis of Baton Rouge, La., felt frustrated when her son Eric faced constant bullying at his locker in middle school.

"When kids change classes, they are penalized for getting to their next class late. Eric had a top locker. When he bent down to put a book in his book sack, the same kids would come up behind him, slam his locker and lock it," Ms. Lewis says.

By the time Eric dealt with the kids, reopened his lock, and got what he needed, he'd often be late for his next class. He never told his mother about the bullying; she discovered the problem after the pink late slips started coming home.

"My son asked me not to go to the teacher, so out of respect to him I didn't. But how could a teacher help that? It happened in the hallway 'out of class,' " Lewis says.

The locker is a common place for bullying, according to Vicki Flerx, assistant research professor at the Institute for Families in Society at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. If schools are serious about dealing with bullying, teachers should be standing by these lockers during class changes, she says.

Bystanders Play a Role

Professor Flerx joins a growing group of educators who are developing strategies—from curriculum models like Wellesley's to whole-school approaches—for combating bullying.

Flerx's model, a whole-school approach, directs every adult in the school, from teachers to janitors to lunchroom staff to bus drivers, to intervene when they see bullying. This approach sets a standard for zero tolerance and rewards anti-bullying behavior in other students.

"It's harder if you're the nerdy kid to stick up for another nerdy kid, especially if he's being bullied by a popular kid," notes Mullin-Rindler. Children, she says, "need different levels of courage to respond to different situations."

What Parents Can Do

Research done in the last five years on bullying offers a number of approaches parents can take to help their children:

- Encourage bullied children to develop more friends. Bullies like to isolate their victims—either physically getting them alone, or socially putting the victim in a position where other children are uncomfortable supporting them.
- Help the child see strengths and weaknesses. Ask the child, "Why would she be doing this to you?" to give the child more direction on how to respond.
- Help the child practice assertive behavior. Experts note that when a child becomes a victim, often the shoulders stoop, the head goes down, and the child does not make eye contact. These physical signs become cues to bullies that this child will be no problem.
- Suggest the child do the unexpected. Bullies believe they know what's going to happen; they don't expect a real fight. Talking back or standing up to the bully may remedy the situation.
- Help the child come up with words to use in a difficult situation, or help the child find ways to completely avoid a bully.

These suggestions should help put children in a position to handle the problem on their own. But if a child needs protection—if he or she suffers physical harm, or cannot concentrate on school work because of distractions related to being bullied—it is appropriate for parents to get involved.

For further information:

- ERIC DIGEST: Bullying in Schools
- An Introductory Guide to Creating Violence Free Schools
- Bullying at School Information. Scottish Council for Research in Education
- Bullying: A Survival Guide. BBC Education
- The No Blame Approach to Bullying
- "Bullying"—How to Stop It!

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Parent News for March 1998

Of Interest

Why Are Books Such as *Everyone Poops* Bestsellers?

Books about the human body, especially those about human waste or other by-products (flatulence, scabs, mucous, tears), seem to hold a special attraction for adults and children alike. Brian Hayden, professor of psychology at Brown University, suggests that knowing more about the by-products our bodies produce helps us see the world as more predictable and more understandable. He writes that our physical bodies—one component of our "self"—produce by-products. Essentially, we create our by-products. Whether we are aware of it or not, these by-products belong to us, and at some level, we are intrigued and fascinated with what our bodies do.

Many of the following titles were first published in Japan and are only recently being published in the United States. Generally, they are receiving favorable reviews from leading journals that review children's books and are selling well in the U.S. market. They are humorous and informative. *Everyone Poops*, by Taro Gomi, came out in 1993. The *Holes in Your Nose*, by Genichiro Yagyu, came out in March 1994, followed by *The Gas We Pass: The Story of Farts*, written by Shinta Cho, in October of that year. In 1995, *Contemplating Your Bellybutton*, by Jun Nanao, was published, and in 1997, *The Soles of Your Feet*, by Genichiro Yagyu, appeared.

All the books focus on various aspects of the human body and human body by-products, and they are written for preschool children. Some hope that openly talking about and acknowledging these by-products may make them less of a source of embarrassment or giggles once kids enter school. Parents report using *Everyone Poops* when they are helping their child make the transition from diapers to using the toilet.

Source

Hayden, Brian. (1997, October). Our bodies' by-products are the topics of some new bestsellers. *Brown University Child and Adolescent Behavior Letter*, *13*(10), 8.

Prepared for *Parent News* by Debbie Reese.

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Of Interest

Satellite Training Sessions Offered on Children, Youth, and Family Issues

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Michigan State University Extension is offering a satellite training series in 1998 called "Putting Research to Work." Four training sessions will be offered via the statewide satellite system that pertain to issues of children, youth, and families:

Thursday, January 29, 1998
Assuring Success for the Class of 2016: The Effect of Parent-Child Interaction on Early Child Development
9:30-11:00 am EST

May 14, 1998
Understanding Youth Assets and Family Resiliency: Implications for Programming
9:30-11:00 am EST

September 24, 1998
Moving People to Action: Facilitating Behavior Change in Youth and Adults
9:30-11:00 am EST

December 10, 1998
Using Data to Strengthen Your Programming with Children, Youth, and Families
9:30-11:00 am EST

Satellite Coordinates:
C Band Satellite: Galaxy 3R
Channel 18

KU Band Satellite: SBS 6
Transponder 7 (Horizontal)
Downlink Frequency: 11872 MegaHertz
Audio Subcarriers: 6.2 and 6.8 MegaHertz

Tapes of each session will be available for purchase for $25.

For more information on any of the sessions, contact:

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Parent News for March 1998

Of Interest

States Alter Driving Laws: Look to Parents to be Involved in Teaching Their Teens to Drive

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States across the country are beginning to address the leading cause of death among youth ages 15 to 20—traffic crashes—by altering driving laws to include more behind-the-wheel time for teens accompanied by a parent.

Most of these changes have been sparked by a campaign initiated in September 1997 by AAA Motor Club called "Licensed to Learn: A Safety Program for New Drivers." The Licensed to Learn Program contains three key steps:

- Raise awareness of the importance of novice driver safety and incorporate the issue into the national public health agenda.
- Mandate more behind-the-wheel driving experience, provide guidelines for selecting driver education courses, and increase parental involvement in teen driver training.
- Implement a graduated licensing system for novice drivers in all 50 states by the year 2000 and eliminate deficiencies in the licensing process that allow new drivers to become fully licensed without assuring they are ready to drive ("AAA Launches Major Campaign," 1998*)*.

Since September, in response to these steps, a handful of states have initiated a three-step licensing system for its youngest drivers, including Illinois, North Carolina, Connecticut, Florida, Michigan, Georgia, and Ohio ("AAA Launches Major Campaign," 1998*)*.

In Illinois, the system changes from a two-step system comprised of a learner's permit and a full driver's license to a system that retains the learner's permit and full license but adds a "graduated" step for drivers ages 16 to 20. This "graduated step" includes tougher penalties for violating traffic laws and new practice requirements for learning drivers ("Ryan, Allstate Team Up," 1998). These practice requirements will require the involvement of parents, because a 16-year-old must have parent or guardian certification that the driver has completed at least 25 hours of supervised behind-the-wheel instruction outside of driver's education class before he or she is awarded a driver's license.

Illinois Secretary of State George Ryan is quick to add that the Illinois law does NOT raise the driving age, as young people can still get their licenses at 16. "The tougher penalties are intended to drive home to young motorists that a car is a tremendous responsibility and that mistakes behind the wheel can affect their lives, the lives of their friends, and the lives of others on the road ("Ryan, Allstate Team Up," 1998)."

Some changes in other states include:

- In Ohio, schools that offer driver training must now include 8 hours of

behind-the-wheel training (the old law required 6 hours). In addition, students must have 50 hours of practice time before they can get a license (Lazarovici, 1998).
- In Michigan, many of the loopholes (such as counting the time students observed others in the car, or time spent driving on a range instead of the road) that could have reduced the required 6 hours of behind-the-wheel training to 2 have been eliminated (Lazarovici, 1998).
- In California, teens must spend 50 hours behind-the-wheel with a parent in order to get a provisional driver's license, including 10 hours at night (Lazarovici, 1998).

National statistics reported by AAA (1998) as they launched the "Licensed to Learn" campaign underscore the severity of the problem:

- While drivers 15 to 20 years old account for only 7% of the total driving population, they are involved in 14% of all fatal traffic crashes and nearly 20% of total crashes.
- More than 6,300 drivers and passengers 15 to 20 years of age died in traffic crashes in 1996—an average of more than 17 deaths each day. These numbers are expected to rise to more than 20 per day by 2012, when the number of young drivers will have increased by 25%.
- In 76% of fatal crashes involving 15- to 20-year-old drivers, police reports show driver error or other factors related to driver behavior are caused by inexperience, poor driving skills, risk-taking, or poor decision making.
- Two-thirds of teen passengers killed were in vehicles driven by another teen.

Despite these numbers, in a survey conducted by AAA, only 20% of the public identifies traffic crashes as the greatest threat to teenagers ("AAA Launches Major Campaign," 1998). Instead, almost half listed drug addiction as the greatest risk, which only ranks 28th among all causes of death for persons this age group.

In contrast, AAA reports that studies show the risk of having an accident declines sharply after someone has three to four years of driving experience—thus the emphasis on graduated licensing systems to allow youths to gain experience and maturity while reducing risk by limiting the situations in which they drive.

According to AAA President Robert L. Darbelnet, "Mistakes are part of any learning process, including driving. The issue is how to minimize the likelihood that crashes will occur while young people are learning how to drive and how best to protect them from injury."

Additional Resources

- Licensed to Learn
- Illinois "Graduate to Safety" program
- 4MY TEEN

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Of Interest

Communicating with Your Teen

The following article is reprinted with permission from **Statewide News from PARENTS Anonymous**, *Winter 1997.*

When asked about their problems with their parents, teens often mention that their parents don't listen to them. Here are some tips for improving communication with your adolescent.

- Give your teen your undivided attention when he she needs to talk. Put down the newspaper; turn off the television; let the laundry wait.
- Remain calm when discussing touchy issues, such as curfews, driving privilege, and guidelines for dating. Try to see things from the teen's point of view while remembering that it is up to you as the parent to set appropriate boundaries for behavior. Avoid lecturing.
- Be polite. Model the respectful mode of communication you would like for your teen to use with you.
- Avoid being overly critical of your teen. Your teen will not confide in you if he or she feels that you are constantly judging behavior and finding it to be lacking. It is challenging, but try to remain firm on central values (such as no drug use) while bending on less crucial issues (such as your teen's preference for outrageous clothes or hairstyles).
- Tell your teen that he or she can talk with you about anything. Then do some research on issues with which you are not comfortable, like sexuality. Reading a book, attending a class, or talking with a doctor, clergyman, or other parent may help.
- Permit expression of ideas and feelings, even if they are very different from your own. Present your own viewpoint as calmly and honestly as you can. Remember that mutual love and respect can exist even when opinions differ.
- Help your teen to build self-confidence by encouraging (but not forcing) participation in activities such as sports, music, art, dance, volunteering, or any other productive and enjoyable hobby.
- Focus on all of the things your teen does well. Reward appropriate behavior. Praise teens for a job well done.
- Hold regular family meetings to discuss what is and is not working in the family.

Everyone should have a chance to express their feelings, tell what they've been doing, and air any problems they've been having.

- Remember when you were a teen and all the scary feelings you had? Just try to be cheerful and ignore your adolescent's moods as much as you can. Make sure your expectations for your teen are reasonable and praise your child when he or she does well.

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Parent News for March 1998

Of Interest

What to Expect from Your Teenagers

The following article is reprinted with permission from **Statewide News from PARENTS Anonymous**, *Winter 1997.*

Erma Bombeck said of preadolescents and teens: "Bury Them at 11 and Dig Them Up at 21." She was just joking, but perhaps you are finding your child's teen years more of a challenge than you imagined. You are not alone.

Traditionally, Illinois Parents Anonymous serves moms and dads with younger children. Parents of teenagers also need support and often deal with difficult situations. The issues parents express have universal themes: " My teen is out of control"... "I'm at my wit's end with this kid"... He doesn't come home at night no matter what I do."

Adolescence is a challenging period for both children and their parents. Three rather distinct stages of adolescence—early, middle, and late—are experienced by most children, but the age at which each stage is reached varies from child to child. These different rates of maturation are connected to physical development and hormone balance, neither of which the child can control. For this reason, adolescents should be treated as individuals, and guidelines for levels of responsibility should be adapted to the particular child.

Early Adolescence: 11-13 Years

Children often challenge adult authority at this age, but they still need help in learning to choose between right and wrong. Setting a good example for children is an excellent way of teaching at this stage and will help them establish fair and human values. Gaining a sense of their own maleness or femaleness is an important part of this stage of development.

- Both boys and girls need a period of time in which most of their activities are with children of their own sex. Scouts, athletics, and church groups are some ways of meeting that need.
- Teens need a hero or an adult to look up to at this age. Special people outside the family, as well as relatives, can be helpful.
- Curiosity about sexual matters begins. Teens begin having new feelings, which are centered around their own bodies, rather than developing sexual relationships with the opposite sex. Accurate information needs to be made available.
- Special athletic, artistic, academic, or musical talents may emerge and should be encouraged and supported as much as possible. This will help the child to develop a

good self-image.

Middle Adolescence: 14-16 Years

Rapid growth and sexual maturation combine confusingly with an ever-increasing need to be independent.

- Teens have a strong sense of fairness, and they become judgmental if adults or peers do not do what is "fair."
- They deeply need love and acceptance by parents and peers, but they may hide such needs in an effort to be mature.
- Annoying habits, such as refusal to wash, poor manners, and untidy dress, are normal ways in which children try to become independent.
- A physical need for extended periods of rest is normal. Sleeping late on weekends may be due to the fact that young people need more rest during this stage than at any time since infancy.
- While few teens will admit it to parents, at this stage, they find security in structure. Explain the reason for each rule and the risks and consequences for breaking it. Let the teen take responsibility for his or her own appearance, except when it is very important to you—a family wedding, for instance.

Late Adolescence: 17-19 Years

The mature appearance and behavior that marks this period of development may be misleading. Worry about whether they are ready to face the changes of adulthood may cause frustration and depression for teens.

- Most young people have opportunities to experiment with drugs and alcohol by this stage, and parents have little power to prevent such opportunities from arising. A major objective should be to get adolescents through this stage alive and intact. Parents should be frank about the dangers of substance use and of mixing drinking and/or drugs with driving. Tell your teens that you will provide transportation *no questions asked* rather than have them ride with a driver who has been drinking or using drugs.
- Open communication about sexual matters is an ideal goal.
- As difficult as it can be, try to find time to spend together with your teen. A shared activity enhances communication and builds the relationship.

For more information about local Parents Anonymous activities, please contact the staff person in your area:

SOUTHWEST ILLINOIS
Elaine Searcy
Children's Home & Aid Society
1002 College Ave.
Alton, IL 62002

Telephone: 618-462-2714

NORTH CENTRAL ILLINOIS
Bonnie Baselt
Children's Home & Aid Society
7431 Astor Ave.
Honover Park, IL 60103
Telephone: 630-837-6445

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS
Linda Brown-Wilkinson
Children's Home & Aid Society
910 2nd Ave.
Rockford, IL 61104-2147
Telephone: 815-962-1043

EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS
Carol Nelson
Children's Home & Aid Society
1819 S. Neil St.
Champaign, IL 61820
Telephone: 217-359-8815

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
Roberta Gonclaves
Children's Home & Aid Society
217 N. Jefferson
Chicago, IL 60661
Telephone: 312-831-8747

LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
Amy Hudson Lechman
The Parent Group
Central Baptist Family Services
2115 Ernie Krueger Dr.
Waukegan, IL 60087
Telephone: 847-263-7272

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Of Interest

Children's Books

The ERIC system offers documents called "Information Guides" on a broad range of topics related to education. Of relevance to children's literature is an ERIC Info Guide called "Children's Literature" written by Sue A. Clary in 1994 (updated on November 15, 1995, by Twana Weiler). This online info guide contains links to many Web sites about children's literature. It is available online at:

http://ericir.syr.edu/cgi-bin/markup_infoguides/Alphabetical_List_of_InfoGuides/Children's_Lit-11.95

Below is a list of children's books on bullies, driving, and the human body:

Bullies

How to be Cool in the Third Grade, by Betsy Duffey (Published in 1995 by Puffin). Ages: 9-12.

Joshua T. Bates in Trouble Again, by Susan Shreve (Published in 1997 by Knopf). Ages: 9-12.

Just One Flick of a Finger, by Marybeth Lorbiecki (Published in 1996 by Dial Books for Young Readers). Ages: 9-12.

Monster Mama, by Liz Rosenberg (Published in 1993 by Putnam Publishing Group). Ages: 4-8.

The Rat and the Tiger, by Keiko Kasza (Published in 1997 by Paper Star). Ages: 4-8.

Driving

Driver's Ed, by Caroline B. Cooney (Published in 1994 by Delacorte). Ages: Young Adult.

Teenage Roadhogs, by Michael Schein (Published in 1997 by MacMillan). Ages: Young Adult.

Human Body

Everyone Poops, by Taro Gomi (Published in 1993 by Kane/Miller). Ages: Baby-Preschool.

The Holes In Your Nose, by Genichiro Yagyu (Published in 1994 by Kane/Miller). Ages: Baby-Preschool.

The Gas We Pass: The Story of Farts, by Shinta Cho (Published in 1994 by Kane/Miller). Ages: Baby-Preschool.

Contemplating Your Bellybutton, by Jun Nanao (Published in 1995 by Kane/Miller). Ages: Baby-Preschool.

The Soles of Your Feet, by Genichiro Yagyu (Published in 1997 by Kane/Miller). Ages: Baby-Preschool.

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

Understanding the Defiant Child *[Video and Program Manual]*

Occasional clashes between parents and children are not uncommon, but when a child's behavior goes beyond mere noncompliance, is chronically negative, hostile, defiant, and disruptive of family life, he or she may have Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD). One of a two-volume set, this video and program manual provide clinicians, teachers, and parents an overview of this disorder and treatment. The video uses real-life scenes of family interactions and commentary from parents to examine: (1) how ODD is distinguished from other types of behavior problems and its relationship to Attention Deficit Disorder/Hyperactivity; (2) long-term outcomes for untreated ODD behavior, including school underachievement, poor peer relations, delinquency, substance abuse, and adult underemployment; and (3) why parent training can help, examining the combination of child and parent temperaments, child management skills, and outside stress factors that may at least partially develop or sustain the child's oppositional behavior. The accompanying manual provides a review and amplification of the material covered in the video, as well as supplemental material, including diagnostic criteria for oppositional defiant disorder, medical and ODD assessment forms, and suggested readings. (The companion video presents the parent-training model for managing ODD behavior.) (Catalog No. 0166, 30-minute VHS videotape and manual, $95, plus $4 shipping.)

Guilford Publications, Inc.
72 Spring St.
New York, NY 10012
Telephone: 800-365-7006, 212-431-9800
Fax: 212-966-6708
Email: info@guilford.com

Before Speech: Practical Guides for Preparing Your Child to Talk

This guide is comprised of activities designed to assist parents in facilitating the language development of typically developing children or children with communication problems, to assist teachers and child care providers in effectively communicating with preverbal children, and to assist speech/language professionals in including preverbal children in speech/language therapy. The bulk of the publication consists of 31 calendar diary pages describing learning activities to use with preverbal children, including space to record notes about the activity performed over a 2-month period and an extra diary page to copy for additional activities. The guide lists problems that interfere with parents helping their children learn to talk. A section of the guide answers frequently asked questions by parents and professionals, including: (1) the importance of appropriate information about and expectations for the social and communication development of children with delays, (2) the importance of "people play," (3) becoming a play partner with children, (4) helping children to initiate communication, (5) communicating nonverbally, and (6) imitating children's behavior. Also included are a monthly parent progress check, a monthly child progress check, and a list of training materials for parents and professionals available from the Family Child Learning Center or from the Communicating Partners Clinic. ($8, plus $3 shipping and handling. Make check payable to Children's Hospital Foundation. Discount on quantity orders.)

Family Child Learning Center
143 Northwest Ave., Building A
Tallmadge, OH 44278
Telephone: 330-633-2055

Homework Improvement: A Parent's Guide to Developing Successful Study Habits in Children before It's Too Late

Noting the importance of establishing a cooperative relationship with your school-age child before he or she reaches high school, this guide is designed to assist parents of elementary students in helping their children establish good learning habits and complete homework assignments, while promoting active, lifelong learning. The guide's introduction highlights the parent's role in student learning and the importance of organization and efficient study methods. The Learning Habits Checklist may be used to identify areas needing improvement. Activities for students in grades 1 to 3 are included throughout the guide. Chapter 1 of the guide, "The Organization Tools," details the use of the Daily Assignment Planner, the monthly calendar, and the weekly schedule, and contains activities to facilitate their use. Chapter 2, "The Reading Tools," describes the "read it and own it" strategy for improving reading comprehension. Chapter 3, "The Practice Tools," presents methods for making studying fast and efficient, including flash cards and sorting boxes to separate material students know from that they need to learn. Chapter 4, "The Writing Tools," presents the writing organizer and library paper builder to guide students through writing assignments. Chapter 5, "The Analysis Tools," provides tools to help students examine study techniques and analyze test performance to improve on future tests. Chapter 6, "Add Your Own Tools," contains several suggestions for developing learning tools such as strategies for improving associational learning, correcting homework, test preparation, and note-taking. The guide's appendix includes a learning habits checklist, daily assignment planner, weekly schedule, and forms that can be copied for use. (U.S., $9.95; Canada, $13.50.)

Good Year Books
Scott, Foresman and Company
1900 East Lake Ave.
Glenview, IL 60025

Starting Small: Teaching Tolerance in Preschool and the Early Grades

The vision of community that the early childhood classroom provides can color children's ideas and expectations about equity, cooperation, and citizenship for a lifetime. This guide and video explore seven early childhood programs, located in cities across the country, and their efforts to incorporate the teaching of empathy and tolerance. Each classroom narrative in the guide includes: (1) "reflections," research-based essays addressing specific themes or developmental aspects of teaching tolerance, such as racial awareness, gender equity, or friendship; and (2) "applications," offering practical ideas for incorporating these concepts into classroom activities. The guide concludes with annotated resource lists focusing on diversity education in early childhood settings. Categories of these lists include racial and ethnic diversity, ability differences, and developing values. The 58-minute accompanying video uses footage from each of the seven programs to illustrate the program characteristics and the impact of instruction in tolerance on the attitudes of both teachers and students. (Package contains text and VHS-video, $250.)

Southern Poverty Law Center
400 Washington Ave.
Montgomery, AL 36104
Telephone: 334-264-0286
Fax: 334-264-3121

Child Abuse and Neglect: A Look at the States (CWLA Stat Book, 1997)

This report provides a comprehensive portrait of America's most vulnerable children and families, gathered as a quick reference to national and state data on the U.S. child welfare system. Data were derived from the Child Welfare League of America's 1996 State Survey of Child Welfare and from U.S. government agencies and other national sources. The report documents the differences and disparities among state data collection, providing a useful baseline for measuring the effects of child welfare service experiments and cutbacks. The figures and tables presented in the report provide child welfare data based on rates for children in each state, comparisons over time to show child well-being and related trend data, and state child welfare budgets and related financial information. Chapter one of the report examines child abuse and neglect in general, while chapter two addresses child abuse fatalities. Chapter three addresses out-of-home care, while chapter four looks at adoption. Chapter five addresses finance and administration. Chapter six addresses family preservation and family support. Chapter seven addresses risk factors, conditions, and trends related to child well-being. (Publication No. 662, $32.95. Make checks payable to CWLA.)

Child Welfare League of America
c/o PMDS, P.O. Box 2019
9050 Junction Dr.
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-2019
Telephone: 800-407-6273, 908-225-1900
Fax: 908-417-0482
Internet: http://www.cwla.org

A Parent's Guide to Imaginative Block Play: Why Blocks Are Still One of America's Favorite Toys

This brochure, developed by a manufacturer of wooden blocks and trains, offers advice on the selection and use of toy blocks with children. The guide asserts that blocks, while often thought of as the most simple of toys, have great strength as creativity builders. Topics discussed in the brochure include: (1) "Why We Want Our Children to Play"; (2) "Why We Want Them to Play with Toys"; (3) "What Is Creativity?"; (4) "Why Are Some People More Creative than Others?"; (5) "A Word about Safety"; (6) "Why Blocks Are Perfect for Exercising Creativity"; (7) "Different Blocks for Different Children"; (8)

"Stages of Development in Block Play"; (9) "How We Can Help Our Children Play"; (10) "Why Buy a Quality Set of Blocks?"; (12) various kinds of blocks; and (24) a brief history of toy manufacturer T.C. Timber.

T.C. Timber/Habermaass Corp.
Charles Birnbaum, Marketing Manager
P.O. Box 42
Skaneateles, NY 13152
Telephone: 315-685-6660
Fax: 315-685-3792

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Resources for Parents

Book Summaries and Reviews

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1. Bowler, Peter; Linke, Pam. (1996). ***Your Child from One to Ten*** **(2nd ed.). Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd., 19 Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell, Melbourne, Victoria, 3124, Australia ($19.95 Australian Dollars, plus $2.00 shipping and handling).**

Language acquisition and other developmental processes in children do not occur haphazardly, but rather follow a sequence that is well-established, and though subject to a moderate variation in detail from child to child, surprisingly uniform. This book provides information to parents concerning their children's development levels and attainments in the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive arenas. The book presents a chapter for each year from age 1 through 10 that outlines children's developmental stages. The chapters provide a narrative, where applicable, of: (1) language development; (2) physical development; (3) thinking and learning; (4) emotions; and (5) social development, including sexual development, independence, play, eating, toilet training, sleep, and books. Each chapter ends with a summary outline for quick reference of emotions, behavior, physical development, education, and suitable presents for engaging the child of the age addressed. In the chapters on children of primary school age, basic information about educational levels and attainments is included to guide parents in understanding average skill attainments in reading, writing, and arithmetic. At the end of the book, there is a final summary table for the first 10 years of life, listing typical personality, physical development, general behavior, language, and education attainments. A listing of other sources is also provided. PS024918

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2. ***Practical Parenting 1-5 Years: Leader's Guide and Parent Book.*** **(1996). Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd., 19 Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell, Melbourne, Victoria, 3124, Australia (Leader's Guide, $75.00 Australian Dollars; Parent's Book, $19.95 Australian Dollars, plus 10% shipping and handling).**

This parent education kit, which contains both a parent book and guide for parent-group leaders, is based on the philosophy that children's needs and abilities change as they develop and that parenting needs to respond to these changes. The kit is also based on the understanding that children develop as part of a family and that relationships are fundamental to their development. Rather than offering immediate solutions, the kit provides assistance in problem solving and relationship building; thus a wide range of options and strategies is offered. The parent book contains 10 chapters: (1) Styles of Parenting, (2) Child Development, (3) Communication, (4) Discipline, (5) Self-Esteem, (6) Toddler Problems, (7) Sexual Development, (8) Managing Changes, (9) Health and Safety, and (10) Play. The leader's guide, in addition to session information for each of the 10 parent book chapters, contains information on working with groups, planning the course, and planning a session. Appendices include a reference list, sample planning form, sample advertising poster, letter to parents, parent education registration, child care registration, course enrollment form, group attendance form, parent expectations sheet, session and course evaluation forms for participants, and a sample "Parenting Certificate." PS025173

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3. Stewart, Abigail J.; Copeland, Anne P.; Chester, Nia Lane; Malley, Janet E.; Barenbaum, Nicole B. (1997). *Separating Together: How Divorce Transforms Families.* Guilford Publications, 72 Spring St., New York, NY 10012; telephone: 800-365-7006; 212-431-9800; fax: 212-966-6708; email: info@guilford.com ($36.95).

Based on a unique longitudinal study of 100 divorcing families with school-age children, this book argues that popular images of divorce, including those shared by many psychologists, are too individualistic, too negative, and too universalizing about an experience that can be very different for men and women, parents and children, and different kinds of families. The book illuminates both the positive and negative effects of divorce on family members and family relationships during the first year after parental separation, offering a nuanced, empirically grounded examination of divorce as a family system event. The chapters are divided into four parts, covering the psychological experience of parental divorce; how individual family members adapt to parental separation; family dyads, adjustment, and change; and parental divorce as a family transformation. Illustrated by clearly presented data, detailed case studies, excerpts from interview transcripts, and observations of mother-child interactions, the chapters cover various topics including: (1) specific factors that help or hinder adjustment for individual family members; (2) links between mothers' and children's adjustment and the quality of their relationships; (3) the impact of parental conflict and other stressors on children's well-being; (4) strategies used by divorced couples to contain conflict and coparent successfully; (5) the development of the custodial household as a new "system"; and (6) folk beliefs about divorce, and how they stand up to the facts. PS026150

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4. Lau, Sing (Ed.). (1996). *Growing Up the Chinese Way: Chinese Child and Adolescent Development.* Chinese University Press, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Sha Tin, N. T., Hong Kong; telephone: 852-2606-6508; fax: 852-2603-6692, 852-2603-7355; email: cup@cunk.hk ($32, plus $5 surface postage charge).

In the belief that by understanding how Chinese children develop we can get to know China and its people better, this volume is a collection of current research by noted scholars on Chinese child development. The volume reexamines long-held beliefs and preconceptions about Chinese culture, draws forth incompatible pictures and contradictory facts about Chinese children, and draws attention to new problems of the modern Chinese family. The chapters of the book are grouped into four sections, exploring the developmental context of Chinese culture and tradition, cognitive development as manifested by academic achievement, social adjustment and maladjustment, and new issues at home and abroad. The specific chapters are: (1) "Parental Control: Psychocultural Interpretations of Chinese Patterns of Socialization" (David Wu); (2) "Understanding Chinese Child Development: The Role of Culture in Socialization" (Sing Lau and Patricia Yeung); (3) "Gender Role Development" (Fanny Cheung); (4) "Academic Achievement and Motivation of Chinese Students: A Cross-National Perspective" (Chuan-sheng Chen, Shin-ying Lee, and Harold Stevenson); (5) "Chinese Parental Influence and Their Children's School Success: A Paradox in the Literature on Parenting Styles" (Ruth Chao and Stanley Sue); (6) "Achievement Goals and Causal Attributions of Chinese Students" (Kit-tai Hau and Farideh Salili); (7) "Learning, Schooling, and Socialization: A Chinese Solution to a Western Problem" (John Biggs); (8) "Mental Health of Chinese Adolescents: A Critical Review" (Daniel Shek); (9) "Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder in Chinese Children" (Kin-pang Leung); (10) "Adolescent Delinquent Behavior in Chinese Societies" (Kwok Leung and Ruth Mei-tai Fan); (11) "The Academic, Personality, and Physical Outcomes of Chinese Only Children" (Toni Falbo, Dudley Poston, Jr., and Xiao-tian Feng); (12) "Crossing the Boarder:

Chinese-Adolescents in the West" (Doreen Rosenthal and S. Shirley Feldman); (13) "Cultural Adjustment and Differential Acculturation among Chinese New Immigrant Families in the United States" (Kam-fong Monit Cheung); and (14) "Self-Concept Development: Is There a Concept of Self in Chinese Culture?" (Sing Lau). The concluding chapter (Sing Lau) highlights and integrates the ideas of the preceding chapters. Each of the chapters contains references. PS026117

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5. Morrow, Lesley Mandel. (1997). ***Literacy Development in the Early Years: Helping Children Read and Write*** **(3rd ed.). Allyn and Bacon, Simon and Schuster Education Group, 160 Gould St., Needham Heights, MA 02194-2315 (Order No. H74420, $40, plus shipping and handling).**

In the past decade, we have learned that children develop language-related abilities simultaneously from infancy onward, and that the conditions that promote first-language learning are the same conditions that promote total literacy development: a social context involving immersion, approximation, opportunity to practice, feedback, and modeling. Intended for teachers, reading specialists, administrators, students in teacher education programs, and parents, this book presents descriptions of strategies for fostering emergent literacy and steps for carrying them out. An underlying theme is the merging of the art and the science of teaching. Chapters in the book are: (1) "Foundations of Early Literacy Development," including past practices, the whole-language movement, thematic instruction, and professional associations and related journals dealing with early literacy; (2) "Observing and Assessing the Needs of Children: Multicultural and Special Learning Needs," including various methods of assessment, and multicultural and language concerns; (3) "Family Literacy Partnerships: Home and School Working Together," exploring why family literacy is important, how to include a family literacy component in the literacy program, and multicultural considerations related to literacy; (4) "Language and Literacy Development," examining how children acquire language and formats for promoting language in the classroom; (5) "How Young Children Learn to Read and Write: An Emerging Literacy Perspective," including developmental trends in literacy acquisition and the place of play in the curriculum; (6) "Motivating Reading and Writing through the Use of Children's Literature," including preparing a literacy-rich environment and creative techniques for storytelling; (7) "Developing Concepts about Books and Comprehension of Text," including repeated story readings, webbing and mapping, and authentic assessment of concepts and comprehension; (8) "Developing Reading through Learning about Print," including sight vocabulary, the language experience approach, and strategies for developing sound-symbol relationships; (9) "Writing and Literacy Development," examining how early writing is acquired and authentic assessment of children's writing development and the writing environment; and (10) "Organizing and Managing the Learning Environment for Literacy Development at School," including integrating literacy learning into content areas and strategies for meeting individual special needs. Each chapter includes two case-study activities. Four appendices list children's literature, high-quality television programs with associated children's books, computer software designed to promote literacy development and creativity, and suggestions for instructors. PS026070

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Resources for Parents

Organizations

Child Rights Information Network

The Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) is an international network of children's rights organizations supporting the exchange of information about children and their rights. CRIN is involved in the implementation of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child; helps meet information needs of organizations working for children's rights; and gathers, produces, and disseminates child rights information through traditional as well as online venues.

Contact:

Child Rights Information Network
Becky Purbrick, Coordinator
c/o Save the Children
17 Grove Lane
London SE5 8RD
United Kingdom
Telephone: +44 171 703 5400
Fax: +44 171 793 7630
Email: crin@pro-net.co.uk
Internet: http://www.crin.ch/

National Latino Children's Institute

The mission of the National Latino Children's Institute (NCLI) is to promote and implement the National Latino Children's Agenda, which is a statement of principles essential for the healthy and complete development of Latino children. NCLI identifies and recognizes "best practice" in the areas of children's health, environment, economic, and educational conditions that are respectful of Latino cultural values and language.

Contact:

National Latino Children's Institute
1611 West Sixth St.
Austin, TX 78703
Telephone: 512-472-9971
Fax: 512-472-5845

Email: ncla@inetport.com

Parent Services Project, Inc.

Founded in 1980, the Parent Services Project (PSP) works with parents and families to build on a family's strengths, thereby promoting positive outcomes for children, families, and society. PSP provides resources and information on parenting and has developed and refined specific activities (e.g., family fun, involving men, and sick child care) as well as information on developing PSP programs in other communities.

Contact:

Parent Services Project
199 Porteous Ave.
Fairfax, CA 94930
Telephone: 415-454-1870
Fax: 415-454-1752

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Newsletters/Magazines

Offspring

This magazine for parents, teachers, and others involved in cooperative nursery schools provides a forum for views on dealing with young children, for expressing a variety of ideas, for promoting the cooperative philosophy, and for enhancing the relationships of those involved in cooperative nursery schools. The spring 1997 issue contains the following articles: (1) "Kids Are Worth It! An Interview with Barbara Coloroso" (Amy Hockey); (2) "If This Is a Co-op...Why Doesn't Everyone Always Cooperate?" (Ruth Koch); (3) "Russell's First Day" (Linda Rogan); (4) "I Don't Want to Go" (Donna Howe); (5) "Play Is Not a Four-Letter Word" (Mary Chalup); and (6) "Speaking Effectively to Young Children" (Nancy Moorman-Weber). The fall 1997 issue contains the following articles: (1) "Dad's Special Day" (Chuck Hage); (2) "Snacking for Health" (Dana Mead); (3) "We Are Alike; We Are Different" (Joan Johnson); (4) "Promoting Gender Equity" (Jan Romatowski, Mary Trepanier-Street); (5) "Playing It Safe" (Judy Acker-Smith); and (6) "Tribute to Co-op Teachers" (Linda Morrison).

Offspring
Michigan Council of Cooperative Nursery Schools
4610 Gregory Rd.
Dexter, MI 48130

Parent Talk

This monthly publication for parents is designed to assist parents with strategies to help their child's learning. A current issue covers spelling and the developmental process of spelling. Activities are suggested to encourage spelling for clear writing. Other resources are mentioned. For more information:

ERIC/REC and Family Learning Association
2805 East 10th St., Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698
Telephone: 800-759-4723

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Resources for Parents

NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: American School Directory

Sponsor: Computers for Education

Description: The American School Directory is the Internet home for all K-12 schools, providing information and communication for teachers, students, parents, local communities, and families planning a move. Each school's Web page provides: (1) information about the school, (2) calendars, (3) sports schedules, (4) clubs and organizations, and (5) contact information and maps. In addition, the site features the "Education Connection" that offers: (1) an index of educational links; (2) links to all state departments of education and professional associations; (3) resources for parents, teachers, and students such as certificates and forms; and (4) the Challenge Zone—a place where students can find solutions to challenges on the Internet.

Address: http://www.asd.com/

Name: Children, Youth and Family Consortium (CYFC)

Description: The Children, Youth and Family Consortium's Electronic Clearinghouse (CEC) is an electronic bridge to information and resources on children, youth, and families. Information about issues related to the health, education, and well-being of children, youth, and families can be accessed via CEC. This site features articles and research material on various topics, including practical parenting, formulating policies, and designing and implementing programs.

Address: http://www.cyfc.umn.edu/

Name: Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

Sponsor: U.S. Department of Education

Description: The Partnership for Family Involvement's mission is to promote children's learning through the development of family-school-community partnerships. The site provides information and resources from the following perspectives: (1) family-school, (2) employers for learning, (3) community organizations, and (4) religious groups. In addition, there is a calendar of events, and there is information on Satellite Town Meetings, online publications, and national initiatives such as "America Goes Back to

School" and "READ*WRITE*NOW."

Address: http://www.ed.gov/PFIE/index.html

Name: Watoto World

Sponsor: New Perspective Technologies

Description: Watoto World was created to bring the creativity of African heritage children to the Internet, provide information and instruction for African American parents to meet the challenges of parenting now and in the 21st century, encourage educators and school systems to provide and utilize Internet access and computer technology in the classroom, and highlight African-centered education and independent Black schools. It includes information from an African and African American perspective. There is a parental guide section, which includes articles about parenting, and a bibliography for children, adults, and teachers.

Address: http://www.melanet.com/

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Parent News for March 1998

Resources for Parents

The Parenting Calendar

Note: Only new conferences not previously listed in Parent News are included in this issue. For a full listing of conferences, go to the PARENTING Calendar section of NPIN.

Conference: Building Better Child Care for America

Sponsor: National Network for Child Care

Date: March 5-6, 1998

Place: Couer d'Alene, Idaho

Description: The National Network for Child Care will sponsor the Western Region Child Care Training conference called "Building Better Child Care for America." The conference will feature several keynote speakers, numerous workshops, and hands-on demonstrations. The keynote speakers will include Sydney Gurewitz Clemens, an early childhood teacher for more than 20 years as well as a nationally recognized author, and Dr. Michael Morrow, a certified trainer in the school-age area.

Contact:

Arlinda K. Nauman
National Network for Child Care, Western Region Coordinator
University of Idaho
Moscow, ID 83844-3015
Telephone: 208-885-7276
Email: anauman@uidaho.edu

Conference: National Child Care Association Annual Conference

Date: March 6-8, 1998

Place: The Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada

Description: The theme of this year's annual conference is "NCCA Celebrates its Birthday: 10 Years of Service and Support for the Child Care Profession." NCCA's conference will prepare center owners, directors, and teachers to tackle the difficult and challenging business and professional decisions facing us as we approach the year 2000. This conference provides an opportunity to enhance participants' management skills, discover innovative programs that can work in their schools, learn about future trends in the private child care community, and consider the impact of legislation and regulation on their businesses.

Contact:

National Child Care Association
1016 Rosser St.
Conyers, GA 30207
Telephone: 800-543-7161
Fax: 770-388-7772
Email: nccaatl@mindspring.com

Conference: Children's 98: America's Promise

Sponsor: Child Welfare League of America

Date: March 11-13, 1998

Place: Washington, DC

Description: Tipper Gore, recognized by the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) for her consistent advocacy of critical mental health services for children as well as her strong support of high-quality programs for vulnerable children and families in America, will address the conference and receive the Natalie Heineman Award for Outstanding Services for Children. Also, George V. Voinovich, governor of Ohio since 1991, will receive the CWLA Special Child Advocate Award. Presentations will focus on celebration and renewal.

Contact:

Child Welfare League of America
440 First St. NW, Third Floor
Washington, DC 20001-2085
Telephone: 202-638-2952

Conference: National Student Assistance Conference

Sponsor: Student Assistance Journal and the National Association of Leadership for Student Assistance Programs

Date: March 15-18, 1998

Place: Disney Coronado Springs Resort, Lake Buena Vista, Florida

Description: Over 1,000 student assistance professionals and school counselors will gather for this year's conference. The theme of the conference is "A Decade of Making a Difference."

Contact:

Lynn Lonsway
NSAC
1270 Rankin Suite F
Troy MI 48083
Telephone: 800-453-7733
Fax: 810-588-6633

Conference: 1998 Work and Family Conference: Work-Life Initiatives and Business Objectives—Making the Connections

Sponsor: The Conference Board and Families and Work Institute

Date: March 26-27, 1998

Place: The Grand Hyatt, New York City

Description: This year's annual conference focuses on how you can inter-relate work-life goals and business objectives. Beyond "making the business case" for work-family efforts, the conference explores the fundamental relationship between a work-family perspective and organizational effectiveness.

Contact:

The Conference Board, Inc.
P.O. Box 4026, Church Street Station
New York, NY 10261-4026
Telephone: 212-339-0345
Fax: 212-980-7014
Internet: http://www.conference-board.org

Conference: How Government Supports Early Childhood Programs

Sponsor: High/Scope Foundation, the Michigan Department of Education, and the Georgia State Office of School Readiness

Date: April 2-4, 1998

Place: The Crowne Plaza, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Description: This conference hopes to show participants how to play an active role in shaping the future of early childhood policy in the United States by providing the opportunity to think through valuable, hard-to-come-by early childhood policy information. Early childhood policy leaders will participate in panel discussions on legislative support for early childhood programs, administrative support for early childhood programs, and early childhood program accountability. Small group sessions will then be held to discuss particular aspects of each topic and to consider applications to participants' own situations.

Contact:

Workshop Coordinator
Telephone: 734-485-2000, ext. 228
Email: gavinh@highscope.org
Internet: http://www.highscope.org/Bro3.htm

Conference: 9th Annual International Roundtable on School, Family, and Community Partnerships

Sponsor: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships

Date: April 13, 1998

Place: San Diego, California

Description: The 9th Annual International Roundtable on School, Family, and Community Partnerships is a preconference day at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. It is aimed at researchers and others who develop and evaluate programs of partnership.

Contact:

Joyce Epstein, Director
Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships
Johns Hopkins University
3003 North Charles St., Suite 200
Baltimore, MD 21218
Telephone: 410-516-8800
Fax: 410-516-8890
Email: jepstein@csos.jhu.edu

Conference: Council for Exceptional Children Annual Convention

Sponsor: Council for Exceptional Children

Date: April 15-18, 1998

Place: Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Description: The theme of the 1998 Council for Exceptional Children Annual Convention is "Connecting Learning Communities." Its focus is on exceptional-students—challenged or gifted—and is open to all educators.

Contact:

Lynn Malarz, Senior Director Continuing Education
Telephone: 703-264-9465
Fax: 703-620-2521
Email: conteduc@cec.sped.org
Internet: http://www.cec.sped.org/pd/new98.htm

Conference: Nurturing Caring Communities for Children and Families

Sponsor: Association for Childhood Education International

Date: April 15-18, 1998

Place: Tampa, Florida

Description: The 1998 Annual International Conference and Exhibition will include symposia on the following topics: (1) supporting the cultural diversity of families, (2) supporting community partnerships, (3) promoting the expressive arts in the learning community, and (4) enabling curriculum and teaching strategies that support learning from infancy through middle school.

Contact:

Association for Childhood Education International
17904 Georgia Ave.
Suite 215
Olney, MD 20832
Telephone: 301-570-2111
Internet: http://www.udel.edu/bateman/acei/confex.htm

Conference: 6th National Roundtable on Outcome Measures

Sponsor: Children's Division of the American Humane Association

Date: April 16-18, 1998

Place: The Menger Hotel, San Antonio, Texas

Description: The overall purpose of the roundtable is to increase knowledge and understanding about the elements of effective outcome-based models in the field of child welfare. Participants will focus on successful strategies to address the challenge of outcome measurement at the child and family, agency, community, and national levels. Work group sessions will also address topics such as the future direction of child welfare, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, and the effect of managed care on child welfare services.

Contact:

Mickey Shumaker, Conference Coordinator
American Humane Association
Children's Division
63 Inverness Dr. East
Englewood, CO 80112-5117
Telephone: 303-792-9900
Email: mickey@amerhumane.org

Conference: Parenthood in America

Sponsor: University of Wisconsin at Madison

Date: April 19-21, 1998

Place: Monona Terrace Convention Center, Madison, Wisconsin

Description: The focus of this conference is on parenthood as a process through which parents and children grow together, enhanced by the support of other families, their communities, and society. The first two days will feature presentations, panels, and symposia concerning parenthood, families, and broader societal and community issues. The third day is action oriented, to create a national parents' organization and to expand organizations of parent educators, family support networks, and family-centered care groups.

Contact:

Parenthood in America
Professional Development and Applied Studies
610 Langdon St., Room 322
Madison, WI 53703-1195
Telephone: 800-442-4617
Telephone: 608-262-4509
Email: ann.whitaker@ccmail.adp.wisc.edu

Conference: Community-Campus Partnerships for Health: Principles and Best Practices for Communities

Date: April 25-28, 1998

Place: Hilton and Towers, Pittsburgh, PA

Description: Community-Campus Partnerships for Health is a nonprofit organization that fosters partnerships between communities and educational institutions that build on each other's strengths and develop their roles as change agents for improving health professions education, civic responsibility, and the overall health of communities. The 1998 annual conference will focus on the principles of community-campus partnerships, "best practices" for putting these principles into action, and building and sustaining a growing movement for health-promoting community-campus partnerships. Participants from communities, higher education, government philanthropy and the health care delivery system will explore the ways in which the strengths and assets of communities and of higher education can be effectively mobilized to improve health and quality of life.

Contact:

Joanna Hunter, Program Coordinator
415-502-7933
Fax (on-demand): 1-888-267-9183 document #202
E-mail: jhunter@itsa.ucsf.edu
Internet: http://www.futurehealth.ucsf.edu/ccph/projects.html

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Conference: 1998 National Roundtable on Family Group Decision Making

Sponsor: Children's Division of the American Humane Association

Date: May 1, 1998

Place: Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Arlington, Virginia

Description: This roundtable will assist administrators, policy makers, and practitioners in enhancing the implementation of family group decision-making (FGDM) in their community. The practice of FGDM has emerged worldwide as an innovative practice to prevent child abuse and neglect and creates a process to engage and empower families (including parents, children/youth, kin, support networks, and tribal members) to make decisions that protect and nurture children. In the United States, at least 25 communities are implementing this practice through the use of such models as New Zealand's Family Group Conference or Oregon's Family Unit model.

Contact:

Mickey Shumaker, Conference Coordinator
American Humane Association
Children's Division
63 Inverness Dr. East
Englewood, CO 80112-5117
Telephone: 303-792-9900
Email: mickey@amerhumane.org

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NPIN
National Parent Information Network

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  The Brown Adolescent Newsletter: Drug Abuse Prevention: Programs that Work
- Of Interest:
  - *Vegetarian Teenagers* by Cheryl Sullivan
  - *Healthy Families Newborn Home Visiting Program Kicks Off Public Awareness Campaign*
  - *Child's Play* by Debbie Reese
  - *Upcoming Events of Interest to Children and Families: Mark Your Calendars!*
  - *Children's Books*
  - *Third International Math and Science Study—12th Grade*
- Resources for Parents:
  - Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets
  - Book Summaries and Reviews
  - Organizations
  - Web Sites
  - The Parenting Calendar

Parent News Editorial Information

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Production Editor: Emily S. Van Hyning

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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster

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April's Feature

Understanding Literacy Development in Young Children

by Dawn Ramsburg

Three-year-old Emma is playing house with Jacob at her preschool. They have a doll in a cradle in front of them. Emma picks up a book and sits in a rocking chair facing the doll and Jacob. She begins telling the story of **The Three Bears** *as she turns the pages of the book, even though she is actually holding* **Goodnight Moon.**

From a traditional *reading readiness* perspective, this activity might not have been labeled as *reading* since Emma is not actually reading the story of *The Three Bears.* However, because Emma is read to regularly both at home and at preschool, she has become familiar with the act of reading. She is able to practice the literacy skills she has observed her parents and her teacher using. From the *emergent literacy* perspective, such activity is considered a developmentally appropriate reading behavior.

This article provides a historical perspective on the shift in our understanding of literacy development in young children from reading readiness to emergent literacy, describes the elements of the emergent literacy perspective, and offers suggestions for promoting the literacy development of young children.

Historical Perspective on Literacy Development: Reading Readiness

In their review of the literature on literacy development, Teale and Sulzby (1986) note that from the late 1800s to the 1920s the research literature on reading and writing focused only on the elementary school years. In the 1920s, however, educators began to recognize the early childhood and kindergarten years as a "period of preparation" for reading and writing. In 1925, the National Committee on Reading published the first explicit reference to the concept of *reading readiness.*

The introduction of this term gave rise to two different lines of research on preparing children for reading (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). While one group believed that reading readiness was the result of maturation ("nature"), the other group thought that appropriate experiences could accelerate readiness ("nurture"). These differing viewpoints underscore the philosophical differences that have characterized much of the research on children's development through the years.

Reading Readiness from the "Nature" Perspective. The dominant theory from the 1920s into the 1950s was that reading readiness was the result of biological maturation. From this perspective, it was believed that the mental processes necessary for reading would unfold automatically at a certain period of time in development (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Researchers argued that good practice would provide an environment that did not interfere with the predetermined process of development in the child. Thus, educators and parents were advised to postpone the teaching of reading until children reached a certain age.

Reading Readiness from the "Nurture" Perspective. During the late 1950s and 1960s, the dominant theory shifted from reading readiness as maturation toward readiness as the product of experience. Proponents of this viewpoint argued that if children had the appropriate experiences, their reading readiness could be accelerated. Teale and Sulzby (1986) identify several factors which contributed to this shift:

- a growing reliance on reading readiness workbooks and tests during the first years of school, which had been used by the maturationists as an intervention tool;
- increased research on young children which was demonstrating that preschoolers knew more than had generally been believed;
- the adequacy of American education was being questioned since the Soviet Union was the first country to travel in space; and,
- supporters of social equality argued that "large numbers of minority children had culturally disadvantaged backgrounds and had to wait until they got to school to overcome the disadvantage (p. xii)."

In response to this shift in thinking, educators and parents were encouraged to use more direct instruction and structured curriculum in early childhood and kindergarten programs in order to prepare children for reading. In reading readiness programs children were considered ready to read when they had met certain social, physical, and cognitive competencies (Morrow, 1997).

The Shift to an Emergent Literacy Perspective

Starting in the 1970s, researchers began to challenge traditional reading readiness attitudes and practices. One of the pioneers in examining young children's reading and writing was Marie Clay (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Clay (1966) first introduced the term *emergent literacy* to describe the behaviors used by young children with books and when reading and writing, even though the children could not actually read and write in the conventional sense. Whereas the concept of reading readiness suggested that there was a point in time when children were ready to learn to read and write, emergent literacy suggested that there were continuities in children's literacy development between early literacy behaviors and those displayed once children could read independently (Idaho Center on Developmental Disabilities, 1996).

Clay (1975) also emphasized the importance of the relationship between writing and reading in early literacy development. Until then, it was believed that children must learn to read before they could learn to write.

From the growing body of research on literacy development, Clay's concept of emergent literacy has evolved to include several elements.

- Literacy development begins before children start formal instruction in elementary school (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). For example, by age 2 or 3 many children can identify signs, labels, and logos in their homes and in their communities (Idaho Center on Developmental Disabilities, 1996).
- Reading and writing develop at the same time and interrelatedly in young children, rather than sequentially (Idaho Center on Developmental Disabilities, 1996; Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Literacy involves listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities (as aspects of both oral and written language).

- The **functions** of literacy (such as knowing that letters spell words and knowing that words have meaning) have been found to be as important a part of learning about reading and writing during early childhood as the **forms** of literacy (such as naming specific letters or words). Children learn to read so they can read to learn (Council for Exceptional Children, 1996; Idaho Center on Developmental Disabilities, 1996; Teale & Sulzby, 1986).
- Children have been found to learn about written language as they actively engage with adults in reading and writing situations; as they explore print on their own; and as they observe others around them engaged in literacy activities (Idaho Center on Developmental Disabilities, 1996; Teale & Sulzby, 1986). For example, when hearing *Goodnight Moon* for the 100th time, children are not just memorizing the words, but actually learning about the meaning of the words and about how words tell a story.
- Children have been found to pass through general stages of literacy development in a variety of ways and at different ages (Idaho Center on Developmental Disabilities, 1996; Teale & Sulzby, 1986).

Suggestions for Promoting Literacy Development

As the research on literacy development continues to emerge, it is important to translate the findings into practical suggestions for supporting early literacy development. The following is a list of suggestions which can promote early literacy development for newborns to preschoolers.

Infants

- Introduce cardboard or cloth books with brightly colored pictures. Try to select books that reflect the child's own experiences such as books about daily life, family members, animals, or food (National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), 1997).
- Read books that have rhyme, rhythm, or repetition such as nursery rhymes since the sound of the language is especially important to infants who cannot yet focus on pictures very well (McMahon, 1996).
- Help increase vocabulary by playing "What's that?" or "Where's the ball?" when reading books together (NAEYC, 1997).
- Point out words on signs at the park, at the zoo, when walking or driving. Explain what the words mean as you name them (NAEYC, 1997).
- If the infant becomes restless or fussy while reading, put the book away so that the child does not develop a negative association to reading (McMahon, 1996).

Toddlers and Preschoolers

- Provide a rich literacy environment by purchasing books for children; taking the children to the library; subscribing to newspapers and magazines; and providing such materials as checks, menus, or greeting cards for play at reading and writing (Barclay, Benelli, & Curtis, 1995; NAEYC, 1997).
- Add simple stories with a basic plot and one central character to nursery rhymes and favorite books as toddlers' language abilities allow for greater listening capacity and understanding (McMahon, 1996).
- Provide a warm, accepting atmosphere for reading and writing by responding to children's requests for reading and rereading favorite stories. Also, respond to questions and comments about print inside and outside the home such as packages at the grocery store, road signs, and menus at restaurants (Barclay, Benelli, & Curtis, 1995; NAEYC, 1997).
- Capitalize on your child's developing interests and take short trips which relate to those interests as

well as reading and rereading stories about similar events or places (NAEYC, 1997).
- Create an environment that is supportive of early writing by making sure paper, crayons, pens, pencils, and markers are available. Let toddlers help you write shopping lists (Barclay, Benelli, & Curtis, 1995; NAEYC, 1997).
- Allow preschool-age children to carry out the steps written in recipes (NAEYC, 1997).

Conclusion

It is never too early to begin reading to a child (McMahon, 1996). By reading to infants, parents can help their children develop an understanding about print at an early age as infants learn to make connections between words and meaning (NAEYC, 1997). By engaging children at an early age in reading and allowing children to observe those around them engaged in reading activities, parents can help foster a lifelong passion for reading that leads to benefits in all areas of development as the children grow older.

Additional Resources

ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English and Communication
http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/

The Parents' & Teachers' Guide to Helping Young Children Learn: Creative Ideas from 35 Respected Experts edited by Betty Farber. Published in 1997 by Preschool Publications, Inc. ISBN 1-881425-05-3.

*READY*SET*READ Early Childhood Learning Kit*

Sources

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Parent News for April 1998

Community Spotlight

The Brown Adolescent Newsletter: Drug Abuse Prevention: Programs That Work

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All around the country there are drug prevention programs that are working and that can be replicated. In cooperation with research scientists, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) prepared a description of programs that are proving effective. Each has been developed as part of a research protocol and tested in a family, school, or community setting. These programs are categorized by a new series of definitions, which describe the programs by the audience for which they are designed.

- *Universal programs reach the general population--such as all students in a school.*
- *Selective programs target groups at risk or subsets of the general population--such as children of drug users or poor school achievers.*
- *Indicated programs are designed for people who are already experimenting with drugs or who exhibit other risk-related behaviors.*

We publish this material as a useful resource and, hopefully, to serve as a catalyst for the development of other successful programs.

Project STAR

This is a universal drug abuse prevention program that reaches the entire community with a comprehensive school program, mass media efforts, a parent program, community organization, and health policy change. The middle school-based component is a social influence curriculum that is incorporated in classroom instruction by trained teachers over a two-year timetable. Mass media are used to promote, reinforce, and help maintain the project. Parents work with their children on Project STAR homework, learn family communication skills, and get involved in community action.

The community organization component is the essential formal body that organizes and oversees all project-related activities. The health policy change component is implemented as a task of the community organization; the aim is to develop and implement policies that affect alcohol, tobacco, and other drug laws, and other local policies, such as establishing and monitoring drug-free sites in the community.

Research on this project has shown positive long-term effects: In their senior year of high school students who began the program in junior high showed significantly less use of marijuana (approximately 30 percent less), cigarettes (about 25 percent less), and alcohol (about 20 percent less) than teens in schools that did not offer the program. The most important factor found to have affected drug use among the students was increased perceptions of their friends' intolerance of drug use.

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Life Skills Training Program

The Life Skills Training universal classroom program is designed to address a wide range of risk and protective factors by teaching general personal and social skills in combination with drug resistance skills and normative education. The program consists of a three-year prevention curriculum intended for middle or junior high school students. It contains 15 periods during the first year, 10 booster sessions during the second, and 5 sessions during the third.

Three major content areas are covered by the Life Skills Training program:

- Drug resistance skills and information provide material that deals directly with the social factors promoting drug use. This content area includes material designed to increase awareness of social influences toward drug use, correct the misperception that everyone is using drugs and promote antidrug norms, teach prevention-related information about drug abuse, and teach drug resistance skills.
- Self-management skills help students increase independence, personal control, and a sense of self-mastery. This includes teaching general problem-solving and decision-making skills, critical thinking skills for resisting peer and media influences, skills for increasing self-control and self-esteem (such as self-appraisal, goal setting, self-monitoring, self-reinforcement), and adaptive coping strategies for relieving stress and anxiety.
- General social skills enhance students' social competence, including how to communicate effectively, overcome shyness, meet new people, and develop healthy friendships. These skills are taught through a combination of instruction, demonstration, feedback, reinforcement, behavioral rehearsal, and extended practice through homework assignments.

The Life Skills Training program has been extensively studied over the past 16 years. Results indicate that this prevention approach can produce 59 to 75 percent lower levels (compared to a control group) of tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use. Booster sessions can help maintain program effects. Long-term follow-up data from a randomized field trial involving nearly 6,000 students from 56 schools found significantly lower smoking, alcohol, and marijuana use six years after the initial baseline assessment. The prevalence of cigarette smoking, alcohol use, and marijuana use for the students who received Life Skills Training program was 44 percent lower than for control students, and the weekly use of multiple drugs was 66 percent lower.

Although the early research with the Life Skills Training program was conducted with white populations, several recent studies show that it is also effective with inner-city minority youth. It also has been found effective when implemented under different scheduling formats and with different levels of project staff involvement. Finally, evaluation studies indicate that this prevention program works whether the program providers are adults or peer leaders.

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Adolescent Alcohol Prevention Trial (AAPT)

AAPT is a universal classroom program designed for fifth-grade students, with booster sessions conducted in the seventh grade. It includes two primary strategies. Resistance skills training is designed to give children the social and behavioral skills they need to refuse explicit drug offers. Normative education is specifically designed to combat the influences of passive social pressures and social modeling effects. It focuses on correcting erroneous perceptions about the prevalence and acceptability of substance use and on establishing conservative norms.

In the research design, the students received either information about consequences of drug use only, resistance skills only, normative education only, or resistance skills training in combination with normative education. Results showed that the combination of resistance skills training and normative education prevented drug use; resistance skills training alone was not sufficient.

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Seattle Social Development Project

A universal program, the Seattle project is a school-based intervention for first through sixth graders that seeks to reduce shared childhood risks for delinquency and drug abuse by enhancing protective factors. The multicomponent intervention trains elementary school teachers to use active classroom management, interactive teaching strategies, and cooperative learning in their classrooms.

As children progress from grades one through six, their parents are provided a training session called

"How to Help Your Child Succeed in School," a family management skills training curriculum called "Catch 'Em Being Good," and the "Preparing for the Drug-Free Years" curriculum. The interventions are designed to enhance opportunities, skills, and rewards for children's prosocial involvement in both school and family settings, thereby increasing their bonds to school and family and commitment to the norm of not using drugs.

Long-term results indicate positive outcomes for students who participated in the program: reductions in antisocial behavior, improved academic skills, greater commitment to school, reduced levels of alienation and better bonding to prosocial others, less misbehavior in school, and fewer incidents of drug use in school.

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Adolescents Training and Learning to Avoid Steroids

The ATLAS program is a multicomponent universal program for boys in high school athletics, designed to reduce risk factors for use of anabolic steroids and other drugs while providing healthy sports nutrition and strength-training alternatives to illicit use of athletic-enhancing substances. Coaches and teammates facilitate curriculum delivery with scripted manuals in small cooperative learning groups, taking advantage of an influential coaching staff and the team atmosphere where peers share common goals. The seven 45-minute classroom sessions and seven physical training periods involve role-playing, student-created campaigns, and educational games. Instructional aids include pocket-sized food and exercise guides and easy-to-follow student workbooks. Parents are involved with parent-student homework and with the booklet "Family Guide to Sports Nutrition."

The program features learning about anabolic steroids and other drugs; skills to resist drug offers; team ethics and drug-free commitment; drug use norms; vulnerability to drug effects; debunking media images that promote substance abuse; parent, coach, and team intolerance of drug use; and goal setting for sports nutrition and exercise. Weight-lifting instruction at the schools promotes safe training practices, reduces the influence of commercial gyms (where anabolic steroids and other drugs are more available), and highlights curriculum components.

Student athletes in the ATLAS program report better understanding of the effects of anabolic steroids and other drugs, greater belief in personal vulnerability to the adverse effects of anabolic steroids, and more certainty that their parents and coaches are intolerant of drug use. In addition, improved drug refusal skills, less belief in steroid-promoting media images, more confidence in personal ability to build muscles and strength without steroids, greater self-esteem, and less desire to use anabolic steroids were found among members of the intervention groups.

Importantly, these high school athletes continued to resist the temptation of anabolic steroids and maintained better nutrition and exercise behaviors one year after the intervention. The program contains four booster sessions for each subsequent year of high school.

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Project Family

Project Family is a series of interrelated investigations designed to: evaluate universal family and youth competency-training interventions to examine the process of positive change in families; test the factors influencing parent participation in family programs; and conduct statewide needs assessment surveys to determine family and community needs throughout Iowa. The prevention interventions evaluated through Project Family are Preparing for the Drug-Free Years (PDFY), developed at the University of Washington, and the Iowa Strengthening Families Program (ISFP), a revision of the University of Utah Strengthening Families program (next). The PDFY has five competency training sessions for parents; one of these sessions is attended by adolescents and parents together. The ISFP has seven sessions, each attended jointly by youth and their parents. The project has also been adapted for Native American populations.

Comparisons of both interventions with control group families show positive effects on parents, child management practices (for example, standard-setting, monitoring, discipline), and on parent-child affective quality. In addition, a recent evaluation of ISFP youth outcomes at the one-year follow-up shows improved youth resistance to peer pressure toward alcohol use, reduced affiliation with antisocial peers, and reduced levels of problem behaviors. Importantly, intervention post-test outcome models demonstrate that positive parenting effects were significantly associated with reductions in children's problem behaviors. Study results are guiding efforts to evaluate whether adding a family intervention to a school intervention is better than use of a school intervention alone.

The second component of the research project studied the most effective ways of recruiting family participation. Findings highlight the importance of a number of practical recruitment and retention strategies, such as flexibility in intervention scheduling, minimizing initial time commitments, contracts from parents' peers, and multiple incentives such as free food coupons, refreshments, and child care. The statewide surveys assessed the prevalence of risk factors, protective factors, and substance-related problems, which have been utilized for health planning purposes.

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Strengthening Families Program

Strengthening Families is a selective prevention, multicomponent, family-focused program that provides prevention programming for 6- to 10-year-old children of substance abusers. The program began as an effort to help substance-abusing parents improve their parenting skills and reduce their children's risk factors. The program has been culturally modified and found effective with African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic families.

In each of the 14 weekly sessions, parents and children are trained separately in the first hour. During the second hour, parents and children come together in the family skills training portion. Afterward, the families share dinner and a film or other entertainment. Parent training improves parenting skills and reduces substance abuse by parents. Children's skills training decreases children's negative behaviors and increases their socially acceptable behaviors through work with a program therapist. Family skills training improves the family environment by involving both generations in learning and practicing their new behaviors.

This intervention approach has been evaluated in a variety of settings with several racial and ethnic groups. The primary outcomes of the program include reductions in family conflict, improvement in family communications and organization, and reductions in youth conduct disorders, aggressiveness, and substance abuse.

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Focus on Families

A selective program for parents receiving methadone treatment and for their children, Focus on Families' primary goal is to reduce parents' use of illegal drugs by teaching them skills for relapse prevention and coping. Parents are also taught how to manage their families better. The parent training consists of a five-hour family retreat and 32 parent training sessions of an hour and a half each. Children attend 12 of the sessions to practice developmentally appropriate skills with their parents.

Session topics include family goal-setting, relapse prevention, family communication, family management, creating family expectations about alcohol and other drugs, teaching children skills (such as problem solving and resisting drug offers), and helping children succeed in school. Booster sessions and case-management services also are provided. Early results indicate that parents' drug use is dramatically lower and parenting skills significantly better than are seen in control groups, but the program's effects on children have not yet been assessed.

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Reconnecting Youth Program

Reconnecting Youth is a school-based indicated prevention program that targets young people in ninth through 12th grade who show signs of poor school achievement and potential for dropping out. They also may show signs of multiple problem behaviors, such as substance abuse, depression, and suicidal ideation. The program teaches skills to build resiliency with respect to risk factors and to moderate the early signs of substance abuse. To enter the program, students must have fewer than the average number of credits earned for their grade level, high absenteeism, and a significant drop in grades; or a youth may enter the program if he or she has a record of dropping out or has been referred as a significant dropout risk.

The program incorporates social support and life skills training including:

- Personal Growth Class, a semester-long, daily class designed to enhance self-esteem, decision making, personal control, and interpersonal communication;
- Social Activities and School Bonding, to establish drug-free social activities and friendships, as well as improve a teenager's relationship to school;
- School System Crisis Response Plan, for addressing suicide prevention approaches.

Research shows that this program improves school performance; reduces drug involvement; decreases deviant peer bonding; increases self-esteem, personal control, school bonding, and social support; and decreases anger and aggression, hopelessness, stress, and suicidal behaviors. Further analysis indicates that the support of Personal Growth Class teachers contributes to decreases in drug involvement and suicide risk behaviors.

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Adolescent Transition Program

The ATP is a school-based program that focuses on parenting practices and integrates the universal, selective, and indicated approaches for middle and junior high school interventions within a comprehensive framework.

The universal level of the ATP strategy, directed to the parents of all students in a school, establishes a family resource room. The goal, through collaboration with the school staff, is to engage parents, establish norms for parenting practices, and disseminate information about risks for problem behavior and substance use. A videotape "Parenting in the Teenage Years," helps parents identify observable risk factors and focuses on the use of effective and ineffective family management skills, including positive reinforcement, monitoring, limit setting, and relationship skills, to facilitate evaluation of levels and areas of risk.

The selective level of intervention, the "Family Check-Up," offers family assessment and professional support to identify those families at risk for problem behavior and substance use.

The indicated level, the "Parent Focus" curriculum, provides direct professional support to parents for making the changes indicated by the Family Check-Up. Services may include behavioral family therapy, parenting groups, or case management services. Following this tiered strategy, a family in the indicated parenting intervention would have participated in a Family Check-Up and received information from the school's family resource room about risk factors for early substance use and parenting practices that reduce the risk of drug use for children.

This program is based on a series of intervention trials, which compromise the Parent Focus curriculum and other intervention strategies, including working with high-risk teens in groups (Teen Focus curriculum) and directed strategies involving videotapes and newsletters. The findings from these studies indicate that parent interventions are needed for youth at high risk to reduce escalation of drug use, and repeated booster sessions are needed throughout the period of risk. These interventions were especially important because it was found that youth at high risk should not be placed together in groups because it can worsen problem behaviors, including those related to school and drug use.

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Selected Resources

For more information on National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) research:

Visit NIDA's home page on the World Wide Web at http://www.nida.nih.gov/. To learn more about prevention research, click on the Division of Epidemiology and Prevention Research. For information on community-based data from the Community Epidemiology Work Group, click on CEWG. For PREVLINE information from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information home page, go to http://www.health.org/.

For information on National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) research:

Visit NIAAA's home page on the World Wide Web at http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/. Full text of many NIAAA publications are available, as well as program announcements identifying research priorities and NIAAA's online bibliographic database, which contains approximately 100,000 records.

For NIDA publications and prevention materials:

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI)
P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20847-2345
(800) 729-6686

This special report, *Drug Prevention: Programs that Work,* is available for $10.00 per copy. Ordering information is provided below.

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Of Interest

Healthy Families Newborn Home Visiting Program Kicks Off Public Awareness Campaign

from the Children's Trust Fund

BOSTON--MARCH 5, 1998. Suzin Bartley, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Children's Trust Fund (CTF), announced last week the launch of a comprehensive public awareness campaign aimed at informing first-time teen parents throughout the Bay State about the availability of the Massachusetts Healthy Families Newborn Home Visiting program--the nation's first-ever universal statewide home visiting program. The Healthy Families program gives new parents access to home visitors who can provide information, as well as support and referrals to existing community resources. An estimated 5,000 Massachusetts teens give birth to their first child each year.

Secretary William O'Leary, of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, spoke at the conference and summarized the goals of the Commonwealth: "By making this investment in our children today, we create a brighter future for tomorrow. This program simply makes sense."

According to Ms. Bartley, the Healthy Families program will be publicized to first-time parents and their families via a comprehensive communications campaign including broadcast, print, and grassroots outreach components. Program officials will support the communications effort with visits to newspapers and broadcast outlets throughout the state.

The schedule of speakers for the news conference included: CTF Executive Director Suzin Bartley; Senate Majority Leader Thomas Norton; Representative Barbara Gardner; President and CEO, United Way of Mass Bay, Marian Heard; Commissioner of the Department of Public Health, Howard Koh; WWLP-TV Channel 22 News Anchor Brenda Garton; FOX-25 Television News Anchor Tory Ryden; STOP & SHOP Community Relations Director Liz Chace-Merino; program spokespeople and others joined Ms. Bartley as she announced the campaign kickoff.

In her speech, Barbara Gardner said, "It's easy to support a program like this, which has strong support from both inside and outside the statehouse."

Said Commissioner Howard Koh, "We want to make Massachusetts the healthiest state in the nation. What better way to do it than to invest in our children. They may make up only 25 percent of the population, but they are 100 percent of our future."

"We are extremely enthusiastic about implementing the Healthy Families Newborn Home Visiting program," stated Ms. Bartley. "Working together with friends, neighbors and legislators about the need to support first-time teen parents, our children will get the safe, positive nurturing early childhood experiences they need."

Two decades of research has proven that home visiting has many positive results, including preventing child abuse and neglect, increasing immunization, and reducing inappropriate uses of emergency rooms. For example, in Hawaii's Healthy Start program, less than one percent of participating families had any reported abuse or neglect. Studies also show that home visits to first-time teens can reduce the incidence of a subsequent teen pregnancy.

"Because program participation is voluntary, it is essential that there is adequate awareness of the program's availability. Last week's news conference is only one of the first steps in this statewide education process," said Ms. Bartley.

Senator Norton's remarks round out the goals of the initiative: "Is this program worth it? Come back in ten years and look into the eyes of the children who we have helped and I think that you will have your answer."

The Healthy Families Newborn Home Visiting program is funded by CTF and is being administered in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. CTF was created in 1988 to prevent child abuse by strengthening and supporting families, and is supported by public and private funding.

For more information about this new program:

Children's Trust Fund
294 Washington Street, Suite 640
Boston, MA 02108
Telephone: 617-727-8957

Other resources and information about home visiting:

Homevisiting: Bridging the Gap between a Family and the Community
http://npin.org/pnews/pnew797/pnew797c.html

Klass, Carol. (1996). ***The Future of Home Visiting.*** Paul H. Brooks Publishing Co., Baltimore, MD 21285-0624

The Future of Children: Home Visiting. (1993). The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Vol. 3, No. 3

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Of Interest

Child's Play

by Debbie Reese

Who are your children's heroes? What are their favorite play themes? Favorite toys? Are they similar to your own childhood heroes, play themes, or toys? Ask any adult about their childhood play, and you will likely see a far-off look come to their eyes as they think back to those early days. A moment of reflection brings a smile as the person recounts fond memories of playing outdoors with marbles or jacks, or playing indoors with a train or tea set.

In 1994, researcher Michael L. Henniger asked adult undergraduate and graduate students to think back to their own childhood and remember a favorite play experience. Henniger found that 40 percent of the participants in the study indicated they engaged in dramatic play more often than other types of play. They described acting out roles of real and imagined people and animals, and indicated they used naturally occurring items as play objects (trees, rocks, dirt, and water) more often than commercially produced toys. The study results also found that the older adults (graduate students) had no memory of playing with commercially produced toys, but the younger adults (undergraduate students) do remember playing with toys. Finally, playing outdoors was recalled with greater frequency among older adults than younger ones. The undergraduates indicated their parents were afraid they might be kidnapped or be victims of molestation, and were not eager to let them play outdoors alone (Henniger, 1994).

Anyone who spends time with young children knows how much they delight in pretending to "be" someone other than themselves. Most of us can remember how much we enjoyed role-play when we were children. Is the hero your child chooses to be the same one you or your parents chose as children?

Not likely, according to the research conducted by researchers Judy French (Boise State University) and Sally Pena (the Idaho Migrant Council). They studied young children's hero play and found that hero play changed dramatically with the advent of television. Prior to television, young children looked to their parents and other adults in their neighborhood or community as a source of ideas for their dramatic play, even if the emulation was subconscious. Before television entered America's homes, the dramatic play young children engaged in emulated their parents' work and activities. Most mothers were not working outside the home and play developed naturally--parents did not plan or organize playtime (Prescott & Reynolds, 1992). Children acted out family themes (house, taking care of baby, etc.) or based their play on activities of real people (teacher, nurse, store clerk, policeman, fireman, etc.) in their lives. Those types of play are significant opportunities for children to act out commonplace events and subtle activities of daily life. Further, these play themes may help children grow into well-rounded, emotionally healthy people (French & Pena, 1991).

Today, preschool children often choose to engage in heroic adventure play in which fantasy or superheroes are their favorite characters to emulate. For the most part, the children say these characters are brave and courageous. However, the characters may not possess a broader range of qualities (such as kindness, helpfulness, gentleness) that favorite heroes of the pre-television era did. Researchers express a concern that this shift may be depriving preschool children of the opportunity to act out commonplace, everyday activities that prepare them for interacting fully with other people (French & Pena, 1991).

In light of these studies, parents may want to use this information as they select preschool and child care programs for their children. It is important that preschool and child care programs include time for unstructured, open-ended dramatic and outdoor play.

Sources

French, Judy, & Pena, Sally. (1991). Children's hero play of the 20th century: Changes resulting from television's influence. *Child Study Journal, 21,* 79-94.

Henniger, Michael L. (1994). Adult perceptions of favorite childhood play experiences. *Early Child Development and Care, 99,* 23-30.

Prescott, Elizabeth, & Reynolds, Gretchen. (1992). *The play's the thing: Teacher's roles in children's play.* New York: Teachers College Press.

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Of Interest

Upcoming Events of Interest to Children and Families: Mark Your Calendars!

The following is a list of events and the Internet addresses for additional information on some of the noteworthy events involving children and their teachers and caregivers over the next few months.

YMCA Healthy Kids Day

April 4, 1998

Every year, YMCAs across the country take part in YMCA Healthy Kids Day. It is an opportunity for families to spend time together while improving their health. YMCA Healthy Kids Day provides kids and families with information on how to be healthier in all aspects of their lives. For the YMCA, good health involves the spirit, mind, and body. A "healthy kid" not only eats right, exercises, and avoids unhealthy substances like tobacco and alcohol, but also demonstrates values such as caring for others and taking responsibility for improving the environment.

For more information, visit the YMCA of the USA or contact your local YMCA.

National Library Week

April 19-25, 1998

National Library Week will focus on the role of libraries in connecting children and adults with books, computers, and other resources they need to live, learn, and work in a global society. First sponsored in 1958, National Library Week is a national observance sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries across the country. It is a time to celebrate the contributions of our nation's libraries and librarians and to promote library use and support. All types of libraries--school, public, academic, and special--participate.

For more information, visit National Library Week.

Week of the Young Child

April 19-25, 1998

The Week of the Young Child (WOYC) is sponsored annually by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Each year activities are designed to focus attention on the importance of the early years for children's learning and all aspects of development. The WOYC also issues a call for action to parents, early childhood educators and allied professionals, business leaders, community leaders, and the public at large to make the critical early years the best that they can be for all children. The theme for the 1998 Week of the Young Child is "Early years are learning years . . . make them count!"

For more information, visit the National Association for the Education of Young Children or contact your local affiliate.

National TV-Turnoff Week

April 22-28, 1998

In celebration of the fourth annual National TV-Turnoff Week, more than 5 million people in 40,000 schools, families, libraries, churches, and community groups plan to go without TV for one week This nationwide effort focuses attention not only on the quality of TV programming, but also on the excessive quantity of television that most Americans watch. National TV-Turnoff Week is sponsored by TV-Free America, a national nonprofit organization that encourages Americans to reduce, voluntarily and dramatically, the amount of television they watch in order to promote richer, healthier, and more connected lives, families, and communities.

For more information, visit TV-Free America.

Take Our Daughters To Work® Day

April 23, 1998

The theme of this year's Take Our Daughters to Work® Day is "Imagine a Day." The purpose of the event is to focus attention on the needs and concerns of girls and help them stay focused on their future during adolescence. Rather than being a career day, the day is meant to focus positive attention on girls' abilities, to urge girls to speak their minds, and to encourage girls to trust their own judgment.

This event began in 1993 and developed as research evidence underscored a shift that occurs in the lives and self-esteem of girls during early adolescence. This research indicated that as adolescence begins, girls show a significant drop in self-esteem, report a lower sense of self-worth, and describe intense feelings of insecurity about their own judgments and emotions. Because of these findings, this day is intended to focus on the developmental needs of girls during adolescence rather than boys. A lesson plan called "Especially for Boys" can be used in the classroom while girls are at work (call 800-676-7780 to order this lesson). Take Our Daughters to Work® Day is sponsored by the Ms. Foundation for Women.

For more information, visit Take Our Daughters to Work® Day.

Child Care Professionals' Day

April 24, 1998

Parents, employers, and local organizations are encouraged to take the opportunity during the Week of the Young Child to recognize the efforts of their child care providers. Local groups may want to plan activities to recognize the valuable contributions made by child care providers. Child Care Aware, Cheerios, and Scholastic are the founding sponsors of Child Care Professionals' Day.

For more information, visit Child Care Aware.

National Science and Technology Week

April 26-May 2, 1998

The major objective of this week is to enlighten children and adults about the importance of science and engineering through hands-on learning activities and events. In past years, a hotline has been available for children to use for help with homework. This year's theme is Polar research and education. NSTW is an outreach program of the National Science Foundation.

For more information, email nstw@nsf.gov or visit National Science and Technology Week.

National Safe Kids Week

May 2-9, 1998

To help parents and caregivers fight the leading killer of children ages 14 and under-- preventable injury--the National SAFE KIDS Campaign is launching a new initiative during National SAFE KIDS Week to address the risks children face at home, at play, and while traveling. *SAFE KIDS at Home, at Play and on the Way* will give children the information they need to help make safety equipment and safe behavior an accepted—and expected—part of their environment.

During National SAFE KIDS Week, tens of thousands of children and parents in communities nationwide will participate in their local SAFE KIDS Quest. The Quest is a kid-focused, entertaining, interactive event that will bring kids face-to-face with real-life hazards present everyday in homes, the family car, and on the playground.

For more information, visit National SAFE KIDS Campaign.

National PTA Teacher Appreciation Week

May 4-10, 1998

The National PTA encourages all citizens to show their appreciation to teachers during the 13th annual National PTA Teacher Appreciation Week by reaffirming their commitment to parent-teacher partnerships.

To help plan and organize an activity with your school, the National PTA has developed a planning schedule, an idea file, a sample press release, a sample letter to the editor, and a sample proclamation.

For more information, visit the National PTA.

Family Child Care Provider Appreciation Day

May 8, 1998

Show your family child care provider how much you appreciate that work by promoting and celebrating Family Child Care Provider Appreciation Day. This day is sponsored by Providers First, Inc., an organization founded in 1996 to support worldwide recognition of child care providers and the valuable work they perform.

For more information or for promotional items, contact:

Providers First, Inc.
568 Parkview Ave.
North Plainfield, NJ 07063
Telephone: 908-668-4993
Toll-free: 888-3-FIRST-1
Fax: 908-668-4558

Stand For Children Day '98: Stand For Quality Child Care

June 1, 1998

In the third annual Stand for Children, people from across America are encouraged to participate in Stand for Children Day '98 activities on or around June 1, 1998, focusing on the need for affordable, quality child care for children in working families. In addition, participants can join people from all over the world online by taking a Cyber-Stand for Children between May 18 and June 8.

"This year, we are Standing For Quality Child Care in communities across the country so that our children enter school ready to learn and are safe after school ends every day," said Stand For Children Executive Director Jonah Edelman.

For more information, visit Stand for Children.

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Of Interest

Children's Books

The ERIC system offers documents called "Information Guides" on a broad range of topics related to education. Of relevance to children's literature is an ERIC Info Guide called "Children's Literature" written by Sue A. Clary in 1994 (updated on November 15, 1995, by Twana Weiler). This online info guide contains links to many Web sites about children's literature. It is available online at:

http://ericir.syr.edu/Virtual/InfoGuides/Alphabetical_List_of_InfoGuides/Childrens_Lit-11.95.html

Below are children's books on learning to read and going to school.

Learning to Read

A Chair for My Mother (includes Free Study Guide; Reading Rainbow Book), by Vera B. Williams (Published in 1993 by Mulberry Books). Ages: 4-8.

All in the Woodland Early: An ABC Book, by Jane Yolen (Published in 1991 by Boyds Mills Press). Ages: 4-8.

The Alphabet from Z to A (With Much Confusion on the Way), by Judith Viorst (Published in 1994 by Atheneum). Ages: 4-8.

Arthur's Reading Race (Step into Reading Sticker Books), by Marc Tolon Brown (Published in 1996 by Random House). Ages: 4-8.

Bug in a Rug: Reading Fun for Just-Beginners, by Joanna Cole, Stephanie Calmenson, and Alan Tiegreen (Published in 1996 by William Morrow & Company). Ages: 4-8.

Is This a House for Hermit Crab? (Reading Rainbow Book) by Megan McDonald and S. D. Schindler (Published in 1993 by Orchard Books). Ages: 4-8.

Going to School

Amanda Pig, Schoolgirl (Dial Easy-To-Read) by Jean Van Leeuwen (Published in 1997 by Dial Books for Young Readers). Ages: 4-8.

Franklin Goes to School, by Paulette Bourgeois (Published in 1995 by Scholastic). Ages: 4-8.

I'll Go to School If, by Bo Flood (Published in 1997 by Fairview Press). Ages: 4-8.

Little Bear Goes to Kindergarten, by Jutta Langreuter (Published in 1997 by Millbrook Press). Ages: 4-8.

Starting School, by Janet Ahlberg (Published in 1990 by Puffin). Ages: Preschool.

Yolanda's Yellow School, by Kelly Adam Asbury (Published in 1997 by Henry Holt). Ages: Preschool--kindergarten.

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Of Interest

Third International Math & Science Study--12th Grade

Recently, 12th-grade results from the largest, most comprehensive international comparison of education ever undertaken were released by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

According to the results from the Third International Mathematics & Science Study (TIMSS), U.S. 12th-graders' performance "was among the lowest of the participating countries in mathematics and science general knowledge, physics, and advanced mathematics."

Education Secretary Riley said, "These results are entirely unacceptable, and absolutely confirm our need to raise our standards of achievement, testing, and teaching, especially in our middle and high schools--and to get more serious about taking math and science courses."

The Secretary outlined 6 steps:

1. Build a firm foundation by having more students study algebra and geometry by 8th and 9th grade.
2. Raise state and local standards of academic performance in mathematics and science.
3. Measure student performance against rigorous standards, like the voluntary national test in 8th-grade mathematics.
4. Offer a challenging curriculum and encourage students to take demanding mathematics and science courses, such as calculus and physics, by 12th grade.
5. Improve the teaching of mathematics and science through teacher training, and reduce the large number of teachers teaching out-of-field.
6. Destroy the myth that advanced mathematics and science are for only a few students.

Also, the Secretary and National Science Foundation Director Neal Lane announced a $60 million joint "action strategy" to improve middle school mathematics (executive summary at: http://www.ed.gov/inits/TIMSS/exec/)

This report, along with the Secretary's statement and other information, is available at: http://www.ed.gov/inits/TIMSS/

Previously released reports on 4th- and 8th-grade results from TIMSS--plus actual test items (in PDF only), information for ordering the TIMSS toolkit, and a "videotape classroom study" of 8th-grade

teaching styles in three countries can be found at:
http://nces.ed.gov/timss/

Below is the executive summary of the report, "Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. 12th-Grade Mathematics & Science Achievement in International Context."

Executive Summary of "Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. 12th-Grade Mathematics & Science Achievement in International Context" (February 24, 1998)

Introduction

The Third International Mathematics & Science Study (TIMSS) is the largest, most comprehensive, and most rigorous international comparison of education ever undertaken. During 1995, the study assessed the mathematics and science knowledge of a half-million students from 41 nations at three levels of schooling.

The information in this report is about students who were assessed at the end of 12th grade in the United States and at the end of secondary education in other countries. It includes four areas of performance: mathematics general knowledge, science general knowledge, physics, and advanced mathematics.

This report on students in the final year of secondary school is the last in a series of three public-audience reports titled "Pursuing Excellence." The first report presented findings on student achievement at 8th grade. The second report presented findings from the 4th grade.

TIMSS is a fair and accurate comparison of mathematics and science achievement in the participating nations. The students who participated in TIMSS were scientifically selected to accurately represent students in their respective nations. The entire assessment process was scrutinized by international technical review committees to ensure its adherence to established standards. Those nations in which irregularities arose, including the United States, are clearly noted in this and other TIMSS reports.

Criticisms of previous international studies comparing students near the end of secondary school are not valid for TIMSS. Because the high enrollment rates for secondary education in the United States are typical of other TIMSS countries, our general population is not being compared to more select groups in other countries. Further, the strict quality controls ensured that the sample of students taking the general knowledge assessments was representative of all students at the end of secondary school, not just those in academically-oriented programs.

This report consists of three parts: initial findings from the assessments of mathematics and science general knowledge; initial findings from assessments of physics and advanced mathematics; and initial findings about school systems and students' lives.

Achievement of All Students

A sample of all students at the end of secondary school (12th grade in the United States) was assessed in mathematics and science general knowledge. Mathematics general knowledge and science general knowledge are defined as the knowledge of mathematics and of science needed to function effectively in society as adults.

U.S. 12th graders performed below the international average and among the lowest of the 21 TIMSS countries on the assessment of mathematics general knowledge. U.S. students were outperformed by those in 14 countries, and outperformed those in 2 countries. Among the 21 TIMSS nations, our students' scores were not significantly different from those in 4 countries.

U.S. 12th graders also performed below the international average and among the lowest of the 21 TIMSS countries on the assessment of science general knowledge. U.S. students were outperformed by students in 11 countries. U.S. students outperformed students in 2 countries. Our students' scores were not significantly different from those of 7 countries.

The international standing of U.S. students was stronger at the 8th grade than at the 12th grade in both mathematics and science among the countries that participated in assessments at both grade levels.

The U.S. international standing on the general knowledge component of TIMSS was higher in science than in mathematics. This pattern is similar to the findings at 4th and 8th grades in TIMSS.

The United States was 1 of 3 countries that did not have a significant gender gap in mathematics general knowledge among students at the end of secondary schooling. While there was a gender gap in science general knowledge in the United States, as in every other TIMSS nation except one, the U.S. gender gap was one of the smallest.

Achievement of Advanced Students

The advanced mathematics assessment was administered to students who had taken or were taking pre-calculus, calculus, or AP calculus in the United States and to advanced mathematics students in other countries. The physics assessment was administered to students in the United States who had taken or were taking physics or AP physics and to advanced science students in other countries.

Performance of U.S. physics and advanced mathematics students was among the lowest of the 16 countries which administered the physics and advanced mathematics assessments. In advanced mathematics, 11 countries outperformed the United States and no countries performed more poorly. In physics, 14 countries outperformed the United States; again, no countries performed more poorly.

In all three content areas of advanced mathematics and in all five content areas of physics, U.S. physics and advanced mathematics students' performance was among the lowest of the TIMSS nations.

In both physics and advanced mathematics, males outperformed females in the United States and most of the other TIMSS countries.

More countries outperformed the United States in physics than in advanced mathematics. This differs from the results for mathematics and science general knowledge, as well as the results at grades 4 and 8, where more countries outperformed the United States in mathematics than in science.

Contexts of Learning

It is too early in the process of data analysis to provide strong evidence to suggest factors that may be related to the patterns of performance at the end of secondary schooling described here. While secondary education in the United States differs structurally in important dimensions from that in many of the other countries, in this first analysis, few of those structural differences are clearly related to the relatively poor performance of our 12th graders on the TIMSS assessments.

Although the lives of U.S. graduating students differ from those of their peers in other countries on several of the factors examined, few appear to be systematically related to our performance in 12th grade compared to the other countries participating in TIMSS.

Further analyses are needed to provide more definitive insights on these subjects.

Conclusions

U.S. students' performance was among the lowest of the participating countries in mathematics and science general knowledge, physics, and advanced mathematics.

TIMSS does not suggest any single factor or combination of factors that can explain why our performance at 12th grade is so low relative to other countries at the end of secondary education.

From our initial analyses, it also appears that some factors commonly thought to influence individual student performance are not strongly related to average student performance at the end of secondary school across countries in TIMSS.

TIMSS provides a rich source of information about student performance in mathematics and science, and about education in other countries. These initial findings suggest that to use the study most effectively, we need to pursue the data beyond this initial report, taking the opportunity and time to look at interrelationships among factors in greater depth.

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

The Study of Opportunities for and Barriers to Family Involvement in Education: Preliminary Results

The Study of Opportunities for and Barriers to Family Involvement in Education was sponsored by the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, the GTE Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Education. Participants were drawn from the 1996 General Social Survey, which constructed a nationally representative sample of households to study social indicators in the United States. Findings summarized in this report reflect information collected from about two-thirds of parents identified in the earlier survey. Through a 10-minute telephone interview, the study asked parents of elementary and middle school students to report on several dimensions of their involvement in their children's education, including: (1) how parents feel about their opportunities to be involved in their children's schooling; (2) how schools encourage parental involvement in students' learning; (3) what additional educational resources parents value; (4) how and what schools communicate to parents about students' learning; and (5) what employers do to support parental involvement in schooling. Key survey findings include: (1) parents think schools see them as important partners in helping their children learn; (2) an overwhelming majority of parents believe that they and their children's teachers should learn more about how they can be effectively involved in their children's education; (3) according to parents, elementary schools appear to do better in key aspects of family involvement than do middle schools; (4) new technologies remain an untapped resource for schools to communicate with parents; (5) most parents are either not involved, or would like to be more involved, in decisions affecting the academic life of the school; and (6) a third of parents said they signed agreements with teachers about how each would support a child's learning. (Includes seven tables summarizing survey results.) PS026104

Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20202
Telephone: 202-205-5507

First Words: Daily Activity Guides for Busy Parents and Professionals

Based on the premise that children learn language best in daily playful interactions with people, this guide for parents and professionals was designed to assist them in working with a child who is beginning to talk or who is not using language very much in their social and learning lives, especially children with disabilities. The bulk of the guide is comprised of 33 language learning activities, designed to be used with a child on a daily basis. Each one-page activity is described, with space included on daily note pages to record what occurred during the activity as the activities are repeated over a 6-month period. Five appendices contain a monthly parent progress check form, monthly child progress check, a problem solver checklist, a list of training materials for parents and professionals available from the Family Child Learning Center or from the Communicating Partners Clinic, and answers to frequently asked questions about learning to talk. (Contains 17 references.) PS026081 ($15, plus $3 shipping and handling).

Family Child Learning Center
143 Northwest Ave., Building A
Tallmadge, OH 44278
Telephone: 330-633-2055

Family Strengths and Youth Behavior Problems: Analyses of Three National Survey Data Bases. Summary

This document summarizes research on the utility of family strength constructs to predict adolescent behavior problems. Three national survey and interview data bases were analyzed for this study, the National Longitudinal Study of Youth-Child Supplement (NLSY-CS), the National Survey of Children (NSC), and the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH). Measures were developed to tap family strengths constructs, including communication, appreciation, religiosity, time together, clarity of roles, commitment to family, and social connectedness. Findings indicated that family strengths were common among all families, regardless of family structure or race. Modest correlations were found between different family strength construct measures. Measures of harsh or strong punishment, marital conflict, and parent-child conflict predicted later behavior problems, with one exception. In the NSFH analyses, socializing with neighbors and friends had a small, positive association with the frequency of adolescent behavior problems. Controlling for socioeconomic variables tended to diminish but not erase the effects of family process variables on behavior problems. In the NSC, parent-child communication predicted all youth outcomes. In the NLSY-CS, family strength measures had little effect on child outcomes once variables such as income, family structure, race, and parent education were controlled. In the disadvantaged sample of the NLSY-CS, family strength measures did not consistently predict children's behavior and self-perceptions. In the NSFH, the most important family strength variables were parent-child time together, parental commitment to the family, and parental encouragement of child's independence. Results suggest that including measure of family processes, such as family strengths constructs, in large-scale national surveys is promising. (Contains 15 references.) PS026059

Child Trends, Inc.
Department of Health and Human Services
Washington, DC

Bullying at School: Advice for Families

This booklet provides information and guidance for parents in Great Britain on dealing with bullying at school. The booklet defines bullying, describes how families can identify if a family member is being bullied, and outlines how schools are trying to create an atmosphere where bullying is not tolerated. It also discusses how to "bully-proof" children by preparing them to cope with bullying behaviors and pressures at all stages in school and discusses how to talk about bullying to children. In addition, the booklet suggests ways siblings and friends can help. It discusses what parents can expect schools to do, identifies problem areas where bullying is likely to occur, and recommends actions to take if the school seems to be doing nothing to address the issue. Strategies being used to reduce bullying incidents are described, including assertive discipline, bully boxes and courts, counseling, mediation, peer counseling, and the "shared concern" method. The booklet then highlights ways families can work jointly with schools to prevent bullying and deal with it when it does occur. How to deal with schools outside local authority control is highlighted, and other organizations to contact for help are described. The booklet concludes with a listing of organizational and print resources. PS026037

Scottish Council for Research in Education
15 St. John St.
Edinburgh EH8 8JR
Scotland
Telephone: 0131-557-2944
Fax: 0131-556-9454

Get Cyber Savvy: A Family Guide. The DMA's Guide to Parenting Skills for the Digital Age: Online Basics, Behavior and Privacy

The ability to meet people, visit places around the globe, and make purchases online has added a new dimension to teaching children about the opportunities and accompanying risks that exist in everyday life. The Direct Marketing Association has created this guide to information use, behavior, and privacy on the Internet to help parents supervise their children's learning experiences, even for parents who do not understand the technology well enough to oversee their children's online use. Areas addressed include: (1) how common sense applies to the Internet, easy-to-use parental control technologies, and what the Internet offers; (2) a short quiz to see how much parents already know about the Internet and to get them prepared for other activities; (3) a guided tour, including e-mail, Listservs, World Wide Web, uniform resource locators, and encryption, for parents to follow in the workbook or online at the computer; (4) sample cases of real situations parents and children may encounter online, including issues of personal information, surveys, web stores, password, and directories, and the opportunity to discuss them; and (5) how to develop a set of rules and guidelines for enjoying cyberspace in families, which includes a family pledge document for each family member to sign. PS026027

Direct Marketing Association
1120 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10036-6700
Telephone: 212-768-7277
Internet: http://www.the-dma.org

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Resources for Parents

Book Summaries and Reviews

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1. Klass, Carol S. (1996). ***Home Visiting: Promoting Healthy Parent and Child Development*****. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company, P.O. Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285-0624; telephone: 800-638-3775 ($34).**

Written from a multidisciplinary perspective, this handbook for home visitors provides functional, field test guidance techniques for working with parents and children from birth to 5 years. The guide offers techniques to enhance children's development in conjunction with educating and supporting families. Firsthand accounts of home visits complement the discussions. Part 1 of the guide, "Home Visiting: The New Profession," discusses: (1) the relationship between parents and the home visitor, focusing on the development of the relationship, teenage parents, and potential difficulties; (2) the home visitor's approach, detailing necessary communication and interpersonal skills, and addressing how to work with culturally diverse families; and (3) the home visitor's professional development. Part 2 of the guide, "Promoting Healthy Parent and Child Development," comprises the bulk of the book and addresses: (1) the development of the child's sense of self; (2) a developmental approach to guidance and discipline; (3) communication and language development, including emerging literacy; (4) family routines, rituals, and celebrations; (5) the importance of play for learning and development; and (6) sibling relationships. Part 3, "Person and Profession," contains first-person accounts of two home visitors' experiences, their professional growth, and the resources promoting professional growth; this section also examines the interaction between their personal histories and their home visiting, based on results of life history interviews. (Contains about 180 references.) PS026093

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2. Watkins, Anne. (1996). ***Child Development: A Guide for All Those Involved in the Care and Education of Children 0-2 Years Old*****. Volunteer Services Overseas, Castries, St. Lucia, British Development Division, Caribbean. (Series of Caribbean Volunteer Publications, No. 22).**

Based on the assumption that a knowledge of child development is essential when planning an early childhood program, this booklet provides information on the typical development of children from birth to 2 years. The booklet begins with a description of stages of physical, mental, and social development and presents a chart illustrating the variation in the appearance of developmental milestones, such as locomotion. Section 1 of the booklet addresses physical development, describes ways to create a safe, stimulating environment, discusses the importance of play for development, and suggests toys to enhance development. Section 2 briefly discusses intellectual development and language acquisition and focuses on the importance of talking and reading with infants. Section 3 addresses social and emotional development, focusing on emotional expression and learning. PS026227

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3. Marzollo, Jean. (1993). ***Fathers and Babies: How Babies Grow and What They Need from You, from Birth to 18 Months.*** **HarperCollins Publishers, 1000 Keystone Industrial Park, Scranton, PA 18512-4621; telephone: 800-242-7737; fax: 800-822-4090 (U.S., $12.50; Canada, $17.50, plus shipping).**

This book provides fathers with specific developmental theory and practical skills and advice concerning how babies grow and what they need from fathers from the time they are born until they turn 18 months. Each chapter provides information and theory on age appropriate play activities and specific information on baby's growth and developmental changes. Chapter 1 focuses on the newborn baby. Advice is provided on a variety of topics including feeding, handling, soothing, bathing, diaper changing, and sleeping patterns. Chapter 2 describes the baby from 1- to 6-months-old. Topics addressed include solid food feeding, dressing, crawling, sitting, discipline, smiling, thumb sucking, routines, rolling over, and teething. Chapter 3 focuses on the baby from 6- to 9-months- old. Topics include weaning, feeding, napping, mirrors, music, teaching, reaching, grasping, positive reinforcement, and stranger anxiety. Chapter 4 describes the 9- to 12-month-old baby. Topics addressed include crawling, sitting, stair climbing, baby sitters, saying goodbye, walking, safety, communication, reading, and first birthday parties. Chapter 5 focuses on the baby 12- to 18-months-old. Topics addressed include cup use, spoon use, scribbling, cruising and walking, first words, body parts, personality, self-awareness, self-esteem, and shyness. PS025176

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4. ***Connecting Children to the Future: A Telecommunications Policy Guide for Child Advocates.*** **(1996). Center for Media Education, 1511 K St. NW, Suite 518, Washington, DC 20005.**

New digital technologies and the rapid growth of the Internet are restructuring our communications systems and transforming education and the economy. Noting that many of the resulting telecommunications policies will be made at the state level, this publication provides guidelines for child advocates to influence state policy regarding children's use of telecommunications. Chapter 1, "Children in the Digital Age," discusses the influences and benefits of digital technology in children's daily lives, the need to develop skills to benefit from these technologies, the current inequality in children's access to computer technologies, and opportunities at the state level to ensure that all children have the same access to information and other educational services. Chapter 2, "Shaping Futures State by State," discusses regulating telecommunications at the state level, targeting the states' Public Utilities Commissions (PUC) for advocates' action, and examines initiatives such as that in Maine involving an advanced network connecting public schools and libraries. Chapter 3, "The Promise of Universal Service," discusses the basic elements of universal service and the requirements of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and suggests a framework for a universal service agenda. Chapter 4, "Winning at the PUC," outlines the development of an effective campaign for influencing telecommunications policy at the PUC, including identifying key corporate players, enlisting allies, developing an agenda, marshaling research and documentation, developing an effective filing, lobbying the PUC, negotiating with corporations, and working with the press. Chapter 5, "Beyond the PUC," considers state legislatures and administrations as additional targets for advocates' efforts. Chapter 6, "Closing the Digital Divide," summarizes the need to close the growing gap between children with and without access to technology. The publication concludes with a list of useful organizations and print resources and acknowledgments. PS025119

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5. Hern, Matt. (1996). ***Deschooling Our Lives.*** **New Society Publishers, 4527 Springfield Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143.**

This book challenges common assumptions about the nature of education and the need for formal schooling and provides an overview of promising alternatives to compulsory education. Following a foreword by Ivan Illich, four sections cover the philosophical roots of opposition to compulsory public education, current analyses of the public school environment and the ways it discourages thought and intellectual development, perspectives on homeschooling, and descriptions of alternative schools. Chapters are: (1) "Kids, Community, and Self-Design: An Introduction" (Matt Hern); (2) "On Education" (Leo Tolstoy); (3) "The Intimate and the Ultimate" (Vinoba Bhave); (4) "Deschooling Society" (Ivan Illich); (5) "Instead of Education" (John Holt); (6) "Sweet Land of Liberty" (Grace Llewellyn); (7) "The Public School Nightmare: Why Fix a System Designed To Destroy Individual Thought?" (John Taylor Gatto); (8) "Challenging the Popular Wisdom: What Can Families Do?" (Geraldine Lyn-Piluso, Gus Lyn-Piluso, Duncan Clarke); (9) "Losing an Eye: Some Thoughts on Real Safety" (Matt Hern); (10) "Learning? Yes, of Course. Education? No, Thanks" (Aaron Falbel); (11) "Dinosaur Homeschool" (Donna Nichols-White); (12) "Family Matters: Why Homeschooling Makes Sense" (David Guterson); (13) "Doing Something Very Different: Growing without Schooling" (Susannah Sheffer); (14) "Thinking about Play, Practice, and the Deschooling of Music" (Mark Douglas); (15) "Homeschooling As a Single Parent" (Heather Knox); (16) "Learning As a Lifestyle" (Heidi Priesnitz); (17) "Deschooling and Parent Involvement in Education: AllPIE--A Learning Network" (Seth Rockmuller, Katharine Houk); (18) "Summerhill School" (Zoe Readhead); (19) "A History of the Albany Free School and Community" (Chris Mercogliano); (20) "A School for Today (Sudbury Valley School, Massachusetts)" (Mimsy Sadofsky); (21) "A Wonder Story Told by a Young Tree (Wondertree, British Columbia)" (Ilana Cameron); (22) "Windsor House (British Columbia)" (Meghan Hughes, Jim Carrico); and (23) "Liberating Education (the Small School, England)" (Satish Kumar). A resource section lists 65 books, 6 readings on deschooling in music, 14 periodicals, and 23 networks and associations.

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Resources for Parents

Organizations

GRAM (Grandparent's Rights Advocacy Movement), Inc.

The Grandparent's Rights Advocacy Movement (GRAM) was founded in 1989 to assist grandparents whose grandchildren live in problematic situations because of chemical dependency, death of parents, divorce, abuse, or neglect. GRAM offers a brochure of information for grandparents of children at risk for abuse and neglect, and offers help to individuals interested in establishing a GRAM affiliate in their area.

Contact:

Grandparent's Rights Advocacy Movement
Box 523
Tarpon Springs, FL 34688-0523
Telephone: 813-937-2317

National Association of Mother's Centers

The National Association of Mother's Centers was founded in 1981 to help women start mother and/or network centers for those involved in parenting, pregnancy, childbirth, and child rearing.

Contact:

National Association of Mother's Centers
64 Division Ave.
Levittown, NY 11656
Telephone: 800-645-3828; in NY call 516-520-2929
Fax: 516-520-1639

National Burn Victim Foundation

Founded in 1974, the National Burn Victim Foundation (NBVF) provides advocacy and services to burn victims and their families, at no charge. NBFV provides burn-related information and referrals and community burn-prevention resources, and conducts seminars on how to determine if child burns are a result of child abuse.

Contact:

National Burn Victim Foundation
246A Madisonville Rd.
P.O. Box 409
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
Telephone: 908-953-9091
Fax: 908-953-9099
Email: NBVF@intac.com
Internet: http://www.intac.com/~nbvf/top.html

Parent Care

Founded in 1982, Parent Care is a national organization of parents and professionals dedicated to improving the experience of parents and their newborn infants when the infant is placed in intensive care. Parent Care affiliates produce newsletters, provide information and referrals, and telephone support to members.

Contact:

Parent Care
9041 Colgate St.
Indianapolis, IN 46268-1210
Telephone: 317-872-9913
Fax: 317-872-0795

National Center for Children in Poverty

The National Center for Children in Poverty was established in 1989 at Columbia University's School of Public Health. The mission is to identify and promote strategies that reduce the number of young children living in poverty in the United States, and that improve the life chances of millions of children under the age of 6 who are growing up poor.

Contact:

The National Center for Children in Poverty
Columbia School of Public Health
154 Haven Ave.
New York, NY 10032
Telephone: 212-304-7129
Fax: 212-544-4201
Email: snb13@columbia.edu
Internet: http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/

Parent News for April 1998

Resources for Parents

NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: ParentTime

Description: ParentTime is an Internet resource aimed at parents with children ages 0-6. Features of the site include: Parenting from A to Z (with a variety of materials written by Dr. Spock and the authors from *Parenting* and *Baby Talk* magazines); *Parent Times* (a weekly email newsletter); and Parent Talk (an online chat and bulletin board area).

Address: http://www.parenttime.com/

Name: Administration for Children and Families

Sponsor: Department of Health and Human Services

Description: The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is responsible for federal programs which promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities. These programs include: the Children's Bureau, the Child Care Bureau, and Head Start. The Internet site offers fact sheets, data on welfare caseloads, press releases, and links to all of the ACF program Web sites, where additional resources are available.

Address: http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/

Name: National Center for Early Development & Learning (NCEDL)

Description: The mission of the National Center for Early Development & Learning (NCEDL) is to identify and study issues of national significance to young children and their families and to disseminate that information to researchers, practicing professionals, and families. NCEDL's periodicals and fact sheets are available on their Web site, including: *Early Developments*--a quarterly magazine focused on the research, training, and technical assistance projects of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center; and *Early Childhood Research and Policy Briefs*--a quarterly synthesis of issues addressed by investigators and affiliates of NCEDL, prepared for the National Institute on Early Childhood Development & Education.

Address: http://www.fpg.unc.edu/activities/projects/research/ncedl/index.htm

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Name: National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education

Description: The National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE) is dedicated to developing effective family/school partnerships in schools throughout America. The NCPIE mission is to advocate for the involvement of parents and families in their children's education and to foster relationships between home, school, and community that can enhance the education of all our nation's young people. Their Internet site offers materials for developing family/school partnership policies, an online resource catalog, and a listing of conferences.

Address: http://www.ncpie.org/start.shtml

Name: National Network for Family Resiliency

Sponsor: Children, Youth, and Families at Risk Network (CYFERNet), which is part of the USDA'S Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR) Initiative

Description: The National Network for Family Resiliency (NNFR) is an interactive network which provides leadership for acquisition, development, and analysis of resources that foster family resiliency. NNFR provides access to family resiliency information and resources through electronic media, training, education, and community development. Online resources are available on the following topics: adolescent sexuality, family economics, family policy, general family resiliency, intergenerational connections, parenting education, and violence prevention.

Address: http://www.nnfr.org/nnfr/home.html

Name: Early Head Start National Resource Center

Sponsor: ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families and WestEd's Center for Child and Family Studies

Description: The Early Head Start National Resource Center provides training and technical assistance to Head Start's new Early Head Start program which supports the healthy development of infants, toddlers, and their families. The Web site features a directory of Early Head Start sites, tips and strategies for trainers, a calendar, and a variety of online resources.

Address: http://www.ehsnrc.org/

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Resources for Parents

The Parenting Calendar

Note: Only new conferences not previously listed in Parent News are included in this issue. For a full listing of conferences, go to the PARENTING Calendar section of NPIN.

Announcement

For the 18th year, the Summer Institute of the Wheelock College Center for Parenting Studies is bringing together professionals from many disciplines who want to learn more about contemporary issues in parenting and how to be more effective in supporting and working with families. Courses will be offered during the months of July and August.

To view course information, link to a complete list of courses and course details.

For more information, please contact:

The Center for Parenting Studies
Wheelock College
200 The Riverway
Boston, MA 02215-4167
Telephone: 617-734-5200 ext. 214

Conferences

Conference: The Experience of Infant-Toddler Centers in Italy: Reggio Emilia and Pistoia

Date: April 20-21, 1998

Place: University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Clifford Hardin Nebraska Center for Continuing Education, Lincoln, Nebraska

Description: This two-day conference offers opportunities for participants to meet with the leading administrators who founded and built these infant-toddler programs. Participants will learn about the physical environments, curriculum strategies, organization, philosophies, and policies underlying the approaches used in Reggio Emilia and Pistoia.

Contact:

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Division of Continuing Studies
271 NCCE
Lincoln, NE 68583-9100
Telephone: 402-472-2175
Fax: 402-472-1901
Email: dcsreg@unl.edu
Internet: www.unl.edu/conted/acpp/reggio/

Conference: Parent Involvement in Schools: Effective Strategies for Authentic Parental Involvement in Children's Academic Success of the Families and Schools Together (FAST) Program.

Date: April 29-30, 1998

Place: Milwaukee, WI

Description: FAST is a collaborative prevention/early intervention program for children in grades K-3. Family Service America, Inc. is presenting this ninth FAST Regional Conference which will discuss the FAST strategies for authentic parental involvement in children's school and education, as well as general information about FAST and how it is implemented.

Contact:

Ms. Pat Reis
FASTWORKS Regional Conference
Family Service America, Inc.
11700 W. Lake Park Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53224
Phone: (414) 359-1040
Fax: (414) 359-1074

Conference: 1998 NACCRRA Western Regional Child Care Conference

Sponsor: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)

Date: April 30-May 2, 1998

Place: Executive Tower Hotel, Denver, Colorado

Description: Each year, early childhood educators, administrators, resource and referral staff, and community leaders from 13 western states gather together to share their expertise, learn about effective model programs, exchange ideas about advocacy, and identify emerging issues. This year's Western Regional Conference is being hosted by the Colorado Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and CORRA (the state coordinating office). Topics will include workforce development, challenges and opportunities presented by welfare reform, successful advocacy campaigns and strategies, technology and where it is taking us, innovative financing strategies, and child care health connections.

Contact:

CORRA
7853 Arapahoe Ct. #3300
Englewood, CO 80112-1377
Telephone: 303-290-9088
Fax: 303-290-8005
Email: HN4770@handsnet.org
Internet: http://www.sni.net/child_care/

Conference: 1998 NACCRRA Midwest Regional Conference

Sponsor: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)

Date: May 7-8, 1998

Place: Holiday Inn City Center, Chicago, Illinois

Description: The annual Midwest conference of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) will feature presentations on resource development and advocacy/public policy in addition to tracks for parent counselors, directors, trainers, and subsidy staff. NACCRRA is a national membership organization which promotes the development, maintenance, and expansion of quality child care resource and referral services.

Contact:

NACCRRA Conference
c/o The Day Care Action Council
4753 N. Broadway, Suite 1200
Chicago, IL 60640
Telephone: 773-769-8174

Conference: Building Quality Conflict Resolution Education Programs

Sponsor: Educators for Social Responsibility and Illinois Institute for Dispute Resolution

Date: June 22-24, 1998

Place: Lisle Naperville Hilton Hotel, Chicago, Illinois

Description: The 6th annual summer conference will focus on infusing and integrating conflict resolution education into all aspects of school life, from providing new ways to teach young children and adolescents key skills and concepts to rethinking approaches to discipline and classroom management. Educators, child care and youth service providers, school board members, parents, and students are invited to attend.

Contact:

Illinois Institute for Dispute Resolution-Quality Learning Inc.
110 West Main St.
Urbana, IL 61801
Telephone: 217-384-4118
Fax: 217-384-8280

Conference: Smart Marriages/Happy Families Conference

Date: July 9-12, 1998

Place: Washington, DC

Description: The Smart Marriages/Happy Families Conference gathers the experts to share the latest innovations in the field of marriage and family education. The conference welcomes counselors, therapists, clergy, family life educators, lay leaders, policy makers, journalists, and the public.

Contact:

Diane Sollee, Director
Coalition for Marriage, Family and Couples Education, LLC (CMFCE)
5310 Belt Rd. NW
Washington, DC 20015-1961
Telephone: 202-362-3332
Fax: 202-362-0973
Internet: http://www.smartmarriages.com/

Conference: Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children Statewide Conference

Date: October 15-17, 1998

Place: Royal Crowne Plaza, Springfield, Illinois

Description: The 1998 statewide conference of the Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children is called "Fitting the Pieces Together for the New Millennia." The conference will include keynote speeches by Lilian Katz, Ira Chasnoff, and Sue Bredekamp.

Contact:

Illinois AEYC
122 South Michigan Ave., Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60603
Telephone: 312-431-0013

Conference: Serving the Military Child...Sharing Creative Approaches Conference

Date: October 21-23, 1998

Place: Arlington, Virginia

Description: The purpose of this national conference is to explore how school systems deal with military populations. This conference is intended for educators, parents, military personnel, health care providers, social service staff, elected officials, recreation coordinators, and others concerned with the education of children from military families. Keynote speakers include General Henry H. Shelton, Dr. Gerald N. Tirozzi, Brenda Schwarzkopf, and Charlie Plumb.

Contact:

Valerie Koschmieder
Telephone: 860-572-2188
Email: vkoschmieder@groton.k12.ct.us

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National Parent Information Network

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- Of Interest:
    - *ADD/ADHD: What Does It Mean for Parents and Families when Their Child is Diagnosed with This Condition?* by Anne S. Robertson
    - *Moving? Choosing a School? Sources of Information on Individual Schools and School Districts* prepared by the ERIC/EECE Information Services Staff
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Parent News Editorial Information

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Parent News for May 1998

What's New on NPIN

For a listing and description of items that are new on NPIN over the last three months, see the What's New on NPIN section on the NPIN Home Page.

What's New: Resources added to NPIN during April 1998

Several new items have been added to several topical areas in the Resources for Parents / Full Text of Parenting-Related Materials section.

In the Early Childhood: Learning section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Hurry Up! It's Time to Go!*
  This Fact Sheet from the Ohio State University Extension provides tips for parents on spending more time with their children by taking out time from their own lives. Topics discussed in this fact sheet include how parents and their children can choose developmentally appropriate activities.

In the Helping Children Learn at Home section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *How Can I Improve My Child's Reading?*
  This ACCESS ERIC publication, based on a 1997 ERIC Digest, discusses the techniques that parents should use in improving their child's reading. The publication also lists techniques that have proven beneficial to other parents.

In the Parents and Families in Society section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *The Times We Treasure*
  This Fact Sheet from the Ohio State University Extension discusses the various rituals that families or individual family members take part in. The six stages of family development which each have unique sets of rituals include leaving home, marriage, families with younger children, families with adolescents, launching children and moving on, and families in later life.
- *Getting to Know You, Your Partner, and Money*
  This Fact Sheet from the Ohio State University Extension provides an exercise for families that may encounter financial problems. The exercise will help families compare their values about money.
- *Dealing with Anger in a Marriage*
  This Fact Sheet from the Ohio State University Extension explores how to cope with anger in a marriage. Topics include misconceptions of anger, how people cover up anger, how anger can be healthy in a relationship, and how to resolve anger.
- *Hurry Up! It's Time to Go!*

This Fact Sheet from the Ohio State University Extension provides tips for parents on spending more time with their children by taking out time from their own lives. Topics discussed in this fact sheet include how you and your child can choose developmentally appropriate activities.

- *Personal and Family Strengths*
  This Fact Sheet from the Ohio State University Extension discusses what makes members of families strong individuals when they make mistakes or have failures. The publication also explores how different family strengths and characteristics such as support and respect also play a major role in developing strong families.
- *Roles and Responsibilities: Who Does Them When You Are Gone?*
  This Fact Sheet from the Ohio State University Extension discusses the dilemma of who will take on the various roles and responsibilities when a member of the family goes away for a short period of time. This article includes useful strategies shared in a recent survey conducted nationwide.

In the Children with Special Needs section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *How Can I support my gifted child?*
  This ACCESS ERIC publication, based on a 1997 ERIC Digest, provides a list of early signs of giftedness in children. This publication also discusses techniques on how a gifted child can be encouraged.

In the Parents and Schools as Partners section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *How Can Parent-Teacher Differences be Prevented or Resolved?*
  This ACCESS ERIC publication, based on a 1997 ERIC Digest, discusses the relationship between the parent and the teacher when dealing with a child. Included is a list of strategies teachers can use to establish an environment that is conducive to open communication.
- *Preventing and Resolving Parent-Teacher Differences*
  This ERIC Digest discusses the importance parents and teachers have for creating a working relationship that fosters children's learning. Included in the digest are a brief description of the cultural context for parent-teacher relationships; avoiding conflicts between parents and teachers through open, ongoing communication; and strategies for teachers and parents when they disagree.

Reviews or summaries of the following parenting-related books were added to the Parenting Resources: Books section of NPIN:

- *Home Visiting: Promoting Healthy Parent and Child Development,* by Carol S. Klass.
- *Child Development: A Guide for All Those Involved in the Care and Education of Children 0-2 Years Old,* by Anne Watkins.
- *Fathers and Babies: How Babies Grow and What They Need from You, from Birth to 18 Months,* by Jean Marzollo.
- *Connecting Children to the Future: A Telecommunications Policy Guide for Child Advocates,* from the Center for Media Education.
- *Deschooling Our Lives,* by Matt Hern.

Information on the following parenting-related organizations was added to the Resources for Those Who Work with Parents: Organizations section of NPIN:

- GRAM (Grandparent's Rights Advocacy Movement), Inc.
- National Association of Mother's Centers
- National Burn Victim Foundation
- Parent Care
- National Center for Children in Poverty

Several new links to Internet resources were added in the Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents section.

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Parent News for May 1998

Community Spotlight

Motherhood Today: Choices That Are Made and How Communities and Employers Can Support Families

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Parents today face many difficult choices. Mothers, in particular, may grapple with decisions about staying home with young children, returning to work, or in some way balancing these two options. Our community spotlight for May features some thoughts from several members of our Parenting-L discussion listserv about the choices of motherhood and their suggestions on ways that those choices might be supported so that families could be strengthened.

We hear from a single mother that new advances in technology have helped her work at home.

"As a single mother of two boys ages 9 and 17, I struggle with two choices. Stay at home and live in poverty or join the workforce and be able to provide for my sons. Fortunately today's modern technology has given me the best of both worlds.

As a freelance writer as well as a Webmaster, I am able to do both--stay home and provide for my family. I am old fashioned in the sense that being a Mom is the top priority in my life. I want to be there for my boys--to have meals with them, maintain the home, attend school functions, and participate in extracurricular activities. In a 9-5 office job, 6 days a week, this just wasn't possible. Working from my home I do so on MY schedule. It may mean working in the middle of the night when the boys sleep--but when they are home, I am here for them, which is important to me.

My boys do have difficulties in dealing with my working at home at times. We have had to set up guidelines to keep the peace around here when Mom needs to work. After a couple of years of this, they are beginning to realize that Mom actually does work and appreciate that I can still be home for them.

My personal opinion is that kids NEED parental guidance. With two parents working out of the home and no one around to supervise, entertain, or just be there for the kids, they simply have too much room to explore the world on their own. I understand completely that situations dictate whether someone can stay at home for the kids and not everyone has the luxury to be home with their kids. I made the personal choice to find a way to do both. Thanks to technology I have."

From another parent we hear that respecting the contribution of a parent who stays at home is important.

"I was fortunate to be able to stay home with my children for 2 years after my second child was born, but unfortunately because of finances, I had to go back to work. After my first child was born it killed me to go back to work after 6 weeks. I wanted so badly to be a stay-at-home mom, but we just couldn't financially do that and I used to cry daily over leaving.

When I was able to stay home it was a very rewarding and wonderful 2 years but I had my down times as well. I most definitely did not watch soaps or talk on the phone all day. I was extremely busy and I have to say I couldn't understand why anyone would think that stay-at-home moms waste their time on TV. It is probably the most challenging "job" anyone could take on. I remember one day when we (my husband, the kids, and I) were grocery shopping and we had to sign up for a check-cashing card. I was filling out the form and the clerk said "Oh, you don't work?" I was livid! My husband stepped in and said, "As a matter of fact she does--every single day at home and probably more so than you or I could ever imagine."

Now I'm a single mom. We've been at it for almost 2 years now and I work full-time because I have to. Although the kids' father provides a decent amount of child support, I still have to make ends meet and would not be able to do so staying home. All I can say is that it's not easy. I'm tired a lot and I often feel overwhelmed, but I do what I have to do and what I can do. My house isn't always the cleanest--we call it the "lived in" look. If someone happens to stop by . . . I'm fond of saying--"If you have come to see the kids and me, come right in, if you've come to see my house, please make an appointment."

Other mothers learn to balance duties, share work schedules, or adjust their employment so that parents are the primary caregivers.

"I told my husband before we were married that I would never stay home with children. My financial independence was too important to me. Then I got pregnant and lost our first baby. The loss was a catalyst that made me re-evaluate a lot of my life and its goals. My husband and I were both in high-stress, high-demand jobs. After my daughter was born, I quit. I didn't want to be on the hamster wheel and wanted to raise my own children. My mother was livid at me for quitting a good-paying job and said I would end up flipping burgers. Almost 4 years later, I'm glad I made the leap. The first 6 months, I stayed home exclusively. It was hard because my whole identity was work and I was with a baby who wasn't talking yet. Also, our budget was stretched with only one income.

I began working part-time in the evenings and weekends. Our child care was still very limited. We're fortunate a retired grandmother lives in the area and helps out when we need it. It's taken me 3 years, but I've carved a niche of part-time work which supplements our income but reduces the time our kids are in care. I teach part-time non-credit computer classes at two different colleges and have a small freelance computer design/copywriting business. My calendar is a juggling act, and I now work 10-20 hours per week on average. However, now I earn more per hour and make more than if I worked full-time at my old job and paid for child care for two children (ages 2 and 22 months). My daughter goes to preschool 2 days a week and my son is in care one morning a week. What I like best is that I can arrange my work around my children--their illnesses, my daughter's field trips, etc. If it's a pretty day, we can have a picnic or go to the zoo. And since I am not working full-time, I can cook more from scratch and do other things to reduce our living expenses.

The part I dislike with our schedule is that we have less time together as a full family. My husband is more hands-on since he's with the kids as their sole caregiver about 10 hours/week. I'm working every Saturday for 3 months. In a way, I consider this the best and worst of both worlds. I get to get out, raise my children, and make my own schedule. On the minus side, since I'm not "working" full-time, I often feel I shouldn't take cost-raising shortcuts like convenience foods, eating out, etc. So I end up with the workload of a stay-at-home mom with 20 less hours per week to accomplish it. Everything has its pluses and minuses though, and I prefer this lifestyle to staying at home full-time or working full-time.

From another family we hear that being entrepreneurs can be difficult.

"My husband Rob and I owned a computer retail store for 7 years. We basically ran the store ourselves and did the work of ten people, working long days and weekends. When I became pregnant with Alex, I thought I was very lucky because I could take him to work with me and if I "had" to take time off, I could. But in the hectic pace of the store, I didn't feel like I was spending a lot of quality time with him, although when he was a baby I kept him in a sling close to me. Breastfeeding was especially difficult.

So after a lot of prayer, my husband and I closed our store when Alex was 8 months old. God provided my husband with an excellent job in the same town at a university, which enabled me to stay home with Alex. We now have some security and insurance which we did not have in our own business. I am enjoying my time home with Alex and since I have worked steadily for the last 20 years, I had no problem with being home and "out of the work force." In fact, I love it, although I think I work harder now than I ever did since the housework in now totally my responsibility and I have had to learn to be domestic.

I think that everyone has to make their own decision about what's best for their child and sometimes finances play a big part in that decision--this is real life. I am blessed that even though we are on a very strict budget, we are able to live on one income right now. For me, I just couldn't see any other way. Perhaps it's because I worked a lot when I was younger and had Alex when I was 34—ten years ago I would not have been able to have this opportunity."

We hear from another mother that even though she was laid off, she adjusted to make the best of the situation for her family.

"When my first child was born, I returned to work, mostly for personal and financial reasons. I was earning a high salary in a job I loved, and felt I could balance my needs, the financial needs of the family, and my child's needs while continuing to work and putting her into day care.

When my son was born 16 months later, I went back to work for much the same reason. However, 6 months after he was born, I was laid off. About the same time, he got very sick. I decided to delay finding another job so I could take care of him.

What I realized during the 3 months it took for him to return to health was that I missed a very critical time in my daughter's life by returning to work so soon. I enjoyed the time I spent with my son as I nursed him back to health, and didn't want to miss more of his childhood, nor that of his sister, if I could help it.

Luckily, I found a job that allows me to work from home. It's contract work, which does not carry guarantees for future income, but it's work that I enjoy and can do while my children sleep or play nearby. It's been wonderful reconnecting with my daughter, and spending time with her and her brother. I feel fortunate to be able to earn income and raise my children, instead of entrusting their care to someone else. Having been on both sides of the issue, I feel that I understand both the decision to return to work for personal and financial reasons, and to stay home and nurture our children. It's a very hard decision, and I feel extraordinarily fortunate to have found a way to balance both.

Of course, my priorities have changed dramatically. Where I used to derive an enormous sense of my self from my work and the personal and monetary rewards I received, I now see myself as the keeper of a piece of the future, and the caretaker of two extraordinary creatures who need me to guide them, love them, teach them, and learn from them. There will always be time and a way to earn income and derive personal satisfaction from a "career." Children are only children once."

One mother examines how we can avoid stereotyping when we make decisions about who cares for the children so that our children, both boys and girls, will have more options when they become parents.

"I find myself in something of a bind. I want my daughter to pursue a career with vigor. I also want my daughter to know that all these years I've put raising her ahead of my own career have been both valued by me and valuable to her. I'm sending her mixed messages: go out into the world and forge a career; stay home and nurture your children.

I believe the years I've spent being here for my daughter have contributed significantly to her development. Kelly is an intelligent, confident, perceptive young woman. She plays select soccer and swims; she enjoys the company of friends; she excels in school. I'm not suggesting that her accomplishments are directly tied to the number of hours I have spent at home, but I believe that my investment in my daughter--the time, the attention, the nurturing--has been paid back a thousand-fold.

When I project ahead and see Kelly in my own position--juggling a lackluster, part-time career with full-time parenting--I don't like what I see. She shouldn't have to choose between a satisfying career and satisfying parenting.

Some of my women friends have enviable, full-time jobs. They're also the first to admit that leaving the house tired at six in the morning and getting home tired at six at night, five days a week, doesn't leave as much time and energy as they'd like to spend with their children. What I've come, belatedly, to realize is that the only way out of this work/don't work situation is to share the responsibility.

A few of the fathers of my daughter's friends participate equally in the parenting of their children. Only a few. For the vast majority of families I see, it is still the mother's sole responsibility to find child care, to come home for a sick child, and to arrange work schedules around children's activities.

If my daughter is going to be the best professional she can be and the best partner she can be, she'll need a partner willing and able to do the same. Last year I listened to a male student's presentation about the effects of child care on children; he alternated between speaking about "the caregiver" and "the mother," never mentioning "the father." Although he was making an attempt to go beyond gender stereotyping, the concept of mother as prime caregiver is so embedded in our society that my student couldn't escape falling back onto stereotypes.

I'm guilty of perpetuating the same stereotypes by relating this issue only to my daughter. I need to send my son the same parenting messages I send my daughter: children need your time, children need your attention, children need your commitment.

Men need to be caregivers on the same level with women. Outside giving birth and breastfeeding, men are just as capable of nurturing their children as women are. My husband is a loving, caregiving father, but we never tried putting equal emphasis on his parenting time and my parenting time, on his career and on my career.

I need to allow my husband to be a full-time parent. When I assume that I'll manage the children's schedules single-handedly, when I make parenting decisions independently, when I always rush in to be the first to comfort one of the children--I am putting a road-block in front of my husband as caregiver.

It was my decision to forego graduate school and my intended career in anthropology to stay home in the role of "full-time mom" with my son Matthew, but at the time I didn't believe there was a viable alternative. We need to make this theoretical alternative--gender-neutral caregiving--a reality for our children. I want Matthew and Kelly to think it natural that men and women balance careers with parenting.

We need to refuse to participate in conversation which denigrates men and women who choose time at home with children over time at work. "Mr. Mom" and "house-husband" are used as pejorative references, the same way that "mommy track" and "just a housewife" are. We shouldn't use these terms to refer to others or to ourselves. Recently, I met a distant cousin who is staying home to be with his young son. When my cousin sheepishly explained that his full-time job was "house-husband" I heard echoes of my own apologetic explanations in the past.

We need to support family life initiatives that enable both men and women to care for their family without sacrificing their jobs. We need to demand more flexibility in the workplace. Today's work-world is largely a dichotomy of career-track or part-time; two good friends of mine--both women--were rebuffed by their employers when they tried to define a middle ground. Men and women should be able to choose less compensation in exchange for working less than 40 hours a week--and still remain on track in their careers.

I want my son to be the best professional and the best parent he can be.

I want my daughter to share her talents with the world and with her children--and I want her future husband to do the same. My job is to see that this is more likely for her than it was for me."

Respecting the choices that different mothers must make to support their families is important, since those decisions, in our complex society, are never easy. The mothers from our Parenting-L listserv suggested that employers might help strengthen families by providing such benefits as flexible work days, child care support, and more work-at-home opportunities. These options would help parents remain good employees but also allow them to balance demands, particularly when their children are young.

For more information:

Work/Family Directions
930 Commonwealth Ave. South
Boston, MA 02215-1212
Telephone: 617-566-1800

Families and Work Institute
330 Seventh Ave.
New York, NY 10001
Telephone: 212-465-2044
Fax: 212-465-8637
Internet: http://www.familiesandworkinst.org/

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Parent News for May 1998

Of Interest

Moving? Choosing a School? Sources of Information on Individual Schools and School Districts

prepared by the ERIC/EECE Information Services Staff

It's that time of year again! It's the time of year when parents begin to think about the next school year and choosing the best school for their child.

Whether your child will be in kindergarten and you are confronting this decision for the first time, or whether you live in a school district that offers a choice of schools--public or private--from which you can pick, or whether you are moving to another part of the country and trying to determine the school district and neighborhood in which to buy a house, the decision is a difficult one and should depend on information about the school itself, as well as comparative standardized test scores.

School quality depends on many factors, not all easily measurable, and not all equally important for each individual child or family. Based on knowledge of their own child, parents may want to consider what is most important to their particular situation: Small class size? A culturally diverse student and teacher population? The availability of extracurricular activities like band or orchestra? Second language opportunities in Japanese or Latin? A particular teaching approach, like mixed-age grouping or Montessori? High test scores?

Parents who are interested in how schools in a particular school district compare can call the district office and get a copy of the individual "school report cards" for each school, which provide standardized test scores at different class levels. If more than one district is under consideration, several districts in the same geographical area can supply this information for comparative purposes. Since schools vary widely at the individual building level and at the individual classroom level, these comparisons can supply one kind of comparative information for schools.

Realtors often have good information about the reputation of particular schools in a geographic area. They can be a good resource when making decisions as to which neighborhood or area of a city might be the best choice, based on what the family is looking for in a school.

Parents may want to keep in mind that no written set of assessments or test scores can take the place of visiting a school and forming one's own opinion about the overall environment and quality of the school.

According to the National Principal Hotline (March 1996) hosted each year by the National Association for Elementary School Principals during their annual conference, here are some things to think about in choosing a new school:

1. Check out the school district's annual report to determine the expenditure per pupil. In many

communities, this dollar amount will be closely linked to school quality.

2. Visit the school to see if you get the feeling that it is child- and family-oriented.
3. Check to see what services are available at the school. Look for guidance counselors, an on-site nurse, a librarian, and a secretary, and check to see if they work at more than one school. If any of these key personnel do work at more than one school, be cautious!
4. Check the structure of the school year. Do you want your child in a year-round school or do you prefer a more traditional school year?
5. Check to see what percentage of the students go on to college if you are looking at a high school.
6. Check the local library for books and videos on moving to a new school. Look for books for children as well as adults.

Several publications and fee-based services also provide information comparing schools, usually by standardized test scores.

Publications

Bainbridge, William, L., & Sundre, Steven M. (1990). *School Match Guide to Public Schools.* New York: ARCO. ISBN: 1037808593

Educational Rankings Annual 1995. Gale Research, Inc. 1995.
(Lists best elementary and secondary schools for each state. Also compares best schools across states. Criteria for ranking schools given in the publication.)

Quality Counts--A Report Card on the Condition of Public Education In the 50 States. A Supplement to "Education Week," January 8, 1998, Vol. XVII.
(Uses data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress for its comparisons.) A portion of the data from Quality Counts is available on the Internet. You can take a look at school report cards from any of the 50 states. Connect to Education Week's Web site at:

http://www.edweek.org/sreports/qc98/98home.htm

You can purchase a copy of this report though an online ordering system, or by calling 800-436-1834.

Harrison, Charles. (1991). *Public Schools USA: A Comparative Guide to School Districts.* Princeton, NJ: Peterson's Guides. ISBN: 1560790814
(This guide is excellent but has not been updated since 1991.)

Koetzsch, Ronald E. (1997). *Parents' Guide to Alternatives in Education.* Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc. ISBN 1570620679

State Comparisons of Education Statistics: 1969-1994, published by the National Center for Education Statistics, 1995. ISBN 0161481287, NCES 95-122.

State Indicators in Education--1997. National Center for Education Statistics, 1997 (NCES 97-376)

Unger, Harlow G. (1993). *How to Pick a Perfect Private School.* New York, NY: Facts on File. ISBN: 0816028877

Services and Organizations

Council for American Private Education (CAPE)
1726 M. Street, NW, Suite #703
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-659-0016
Email: cape@connectinc.com

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
Although NCES does not collect statistics to evaluate or compare schools and school districts, some states do collect such statistics. John Ralph may be able to provide names of persons to contact in individual states.
Contact: John Ralph (202-219-2270)

School Match (private company)
5027 Pine Creek Dr.
Westerville, OH 43081
Telephone: 800-992-5323
Provides comparative information on specific schools in the United States. (THIS IS A FEE-BASED SERVICE.)

http://schoolmatch.com/ - This is the new Web address for SchoolMatch, the national school research/consulting organization and database provider. The new offering for parents, educators, realtors, attorneys, corporate executives, and others interested in school information includes:

- A helpful glossary of education-related terms
- National statistics about elementary and secondary education
- A state-by state breakdown of how states organize educational resources
- News Briefs about educational policy changes
- Frequently asked questions (FAQ's) about school data

The SchoolMatch Web site allows the user to scan and choose from a variety of additional data and consulting services, such as comparing schooling alternatives, helping solve school-related problems, assessing the school issue in child custody cases, and evaluating quality of life factors in corporate site selection.

Quality Education Data (QED) (private company)
Denver, CO
Telephone: 800-525-5811

State-by-State School Guides that include demographic descriptions of schools in each state are published by QED based on an annual survey. The Guides list all public, private, and parochial schools in each state; provide listings of names and addresses of school district and school building administrators; and list the numbers of computers and predominant brands of computers used in the schools. Primarily intended for those who are marketing to school districts, QED offers mailing lists. THIS IS A FEE-BASED SERVICE.

State Departments of Education
Many State Departments of Education provide detailed assessment testing data for the school districts/counties in their state (e.g., Colorado, Oregon) through the Internet. You can link to all the State Departments of Education at:

http://ericeece.org/statlink.html

Other Internet Sites

American School Directory (lets you search for information on 106,000 K-12 schools in the United States)
http://www.asd.com/

Petersons Education Center
http://www.petersons.com/

Phaedrus Co--Private School Information
http://www.thinkthink.com/schools/

Choosing the Right School--A Family Guide
(National Association of Independent Schools)
http://www.schools.com/nais/pub/choosing/right-school.html

Schools Online
http://www.schools.com/

School District Data Book Profiles
Searchable Web site that provides demographic data for school districts across the country.
http://govinfo.kerr.orst.edu/sddb-stateis.html

School Directory Web site (provides links to school Web pages)
http://esinet.com/schooldirectory/AMERICA.HTM

State Departments of Education Web sites
Although the data available varies by state, some states provide links to school districts in their state and provide a variety of useful data. You can find links to State Departments of Education at the following Web address:

http://ericeece.org/statlink.html

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Of Interest

Preparing a Family Safety Plan for Emergency Situations

prepared by Dawn Ramsburg

No community is immune to the natural disasters and emergencies that can arise throughout the year. Already this year, there have been tornadoes in the South and Midwest, floods and landslides in California, and winter storms in the Northern regions of the United States. In addition to natural disasters, homes and communities can be affected by fires or radiological and hazardous materials accidents.

While such experiences are frightening and frustrating, it is possible to alleviate some of the stress and concerns by being prepared. Planning and preparation is especially important for families if children may be at school and parents at work when a disaster strikes. This means that family members will need to know how to link up again in the event of neighborhood evacuation or damage to the home. To help avoid injury and panic in your family in case of an emergency, it is important to create a family preparedness plan.

To help you create such a plan, the National Weather Service, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the American Red Cross have devised the following four-step process (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Federal Emergency Management Agency; & The American Red Cross, 1992).

1. Do Your Homework.

- Find out what disasters could happen in your area. (Visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency and select your state to see what may occur in your area.)
- Request information from your local Red Cross agency on how to prepare and respond to each potential disaster.
- Learn about your community's warning signals (what they sound like, what they mean, and what actions you should take when they are activated).
- Find out about the emergency response plan for your workplace, your children's school or day care center, and other places where your family spends time.
- Ask about animal care since pets may not be allowed inside emergency shelters.

2. Create a Family Disaster Plan.

- Meet with your family and discuss the need to prepare for a disaster.
- Develop a plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.
- Establish meeting places inside and outside your home and outside the neighborhood. Make sure everyone knows when and how to contact each other if separated.
- Decide on the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.

- Establish an out-of-state family contact (friend or relative). Call this person after the disaster to let them know where you are and if you are okay. Make sure everyone knows the contact's phone number.
- Learn what to do in an evacuation and what you should and cannot take to a shelter.

3. Make a Checklist and Periodically Update It.

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones (fire, police, ambulance, etc.) and teach children how and when to call them.
- Know how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at the main switches.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a disaster survival kit (see below).
- Learn basic first aid. Classes are often offered by various community organizations.
- Keep important documents in a safe deposit box or fire proof container and mail copies of documents to a friend or family member out of the area for safekeeping.

4. Practice and Maintain Your Plan.

- Test your children's knowledge of the plan every 6 months.
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
- Replace stored water every 3 months and stored food every 6 months.
- Test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries once a year.

One way to practice your safety plan is to actually put your plan into action when the emergency sirens in your area are tested each month. For example, at one local day care center, they have the children gather in the hall and put their heads down according to their safety plan when the sirens are tested on the first Tuesday of each month. The advantage of practicing in this way is that the children are learning what they will need to do in the event of a real emergency, but without the stress of the real situation. At home, you can plan a fire drill for your family a few times a year and similarly implement the family safety plan for meeting outside the home. This lets everyone in the family learn what they should be doing in case an emergency does arise.

Despite planning and preparation, it will not be possible to avoid all emergencies or disasters. Therefore, in addition to having a preparedness plan, it is also important to have a kit ready to help you survive in the first few days following a disaster.

A disaster supply kit should include:

- A 3-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil;
- Change of clothing and footwear per person;
- First-aid kit, including prescription medicines;
- One blanket or sleeping bag per person;
- Emergency tools including a battery-powered radio and flashlight and extra batteries;
- An extra set of car keys and a credit card or cash; and
- Special items for infants or other family members (formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk, denture and contact lenses supplies, extra eye glasses).

While these supplies can help your family get by until they can return home or until they find other arrangements, reducing the long-term effects of a disaster on your family will take additional time and resources. Following a disaster, children may display fear, anger, loss, or become quiet and withdrawn

(Illinois Cooperative Extension Service, 1995). It is important that children be encouraged to talk about their feelings and express their fears. Children's fears may show in nightmares, increased crying or clinging, or becoming withdrawn. By discussing these fears, children can learn to cope with what occurred.

It is also important to continue to make time for your children in times of emergency. While this may sound unreasonable, your children just need a moment of reassurance to feel more secure and safe in this disruptive situation (Smith, 1987). Children will also be reassured by knowing what is happening, so it is important to speak honestly about what is going on. For example, if you must leave your house because of floods, be honest about the possibility of losing some belongings. Children can also be reassured by maintaining certain rituals such as hearing a bedtime story.

While no family ever wants to face an emergency, planning and preparation can reduce some of the potential harm of these events. Following a disaster, families can overcome the adversity of the situation by supporting each other and working together to overcome what may be lost. This support can strengthen the family in ways that will last long after the crisis is resolved.

For more information on preparing a family survival kit, please visit:

American Red Cross Disasters Supplies Kit

Family Disaster Kit

FEMA Disaster Supply Kit

Additional Resources

American Red Cross-Disaster Safety
http://www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/index.html

FEMA Family Disaster Plan
http://www.fema.gov/kids/dzplan.htm

Helping Children After a Disaster from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
http://www.psych.med.umich.edu/web/aacap/factsFam/disaster.htm

Illinois Cooperative Extension Service Disaster Resources
http://spectre.ag.uiuc.edu/~disaster/

Sources

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Federal Emergency Management Agency; & The American Red Cross. (1992). *A preparedness guide, including safety information for schools* [Online]. Available: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/tornado.htm#family [1998, April 2].

Illinois Cooperative Extension Service. (1995). *Helping children cope with a disaster* [Online]. Available: http://www.ag.uiuc.edu/~disaster/facts/kidcope.html [1998, April 15].

Smith, Charles. (1987). *Helping children through the flood* [Online]. Available:

http://www.nncc.org/Guidance/help.flood.html [1998, April 6].

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Of Interest

Eye Care for Children

Vision is the primary avenue for learning, and it is important that parents take their child for periodic eye examinations. Often, the vision screenings that take place in school do not detect all vision problems that can interfere with the child's study in school. When a child's eyes do not work together, it can affect his or her visual motor skills and performance in school. The amount of reading and writing required increases in third grade, and if a child's grades fall, he or she may be having vision problems that can be detected by an eye doctor.

The Academy of Opthalmology and the American Optometric Association recommend that children have eye examinations at about 6 months, 3 years, and 5 years of age.

Source

Appleby, Kathleen. (1997). Observing visual skills. *Children and Families: The Magazine of the National Head Start Association, 16*(2), 42-45.

Prepared for *Parent News* by Debbie Reese.

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Of Interest

Representations of Moms in Television Sitcoms

Working Mother magazine recently carried a brief article about research conducted by A. Rae Simpson, a researcher with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Simpson's study of mothers on television sitcoms confirms what many working mothers may have suspected. Television moms are often shown in traditional roles of housewife and stay-at-home mom, which doesn't accurately reflect current demographics. In reality, over 70 percent of mothers work, and that reality is not reflected in the sitcoms. Asked why this is important to note, Simpson says "Because people are watching and learning," and that research shows that "the media influence parents' knowledge, their beliefs and attitudes" (p. 16).

This research suggests the need for parents to critically view television programs with their children, pointing out the ways in which the programs do not reflect reality.

Source

Memo to TV moms: Get real! (1998, March). *Working Mother*, p. 16.

Prepared for *Parent News* by Debbie Reese.

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Of Interest

Children's Books

Below are children's books on floods and natural disasters, language development, and mothers.

Floods and Natural Disasters

The Flood That Came to Grandma's House, by L. Stallone (Published in1992 by Upshur). Ages: 3-5 years.

City Storm, by M. J. Parker (Published in 1990 by Scholastic). Ages: Grades K-3.

Come a Tide, by G. E. Lyon (Published in 1990 by Orchard Books). Ages: Grades K-3.

About Disasters, by J. Berry (Published in 1990 by Children's Press). Ages: Grades 4-6.

Flood, by B. Knapp (Published in 1990 by Raintree Steck-Vaughn). Ages: Grades 4-6.

Language Development

All about Where, by Tana Hoban (Published in 1991 by Greenwillow). Ages: Preschool.

Seeing, Saying, Doing, Playing: A Big Book of Action Words, by Taro Gomi (Published in 1991 by Chronicle Books). Ages: Preschool.

Who Said Moo?, By Harriet Ziefert and Simms Taback (Published in 1996 by HarperFestival). Ages: Preschool.

Mothers

A Question of Trust, by Marion Dane Bauer (Published in 1994 by Scholastic). Ages: Grades 5-6.

This Quiet Lady, by Charlotte Zolotow (Published in 1992 by Greenwillow). Ages: All.

What Will Mommy Do While I'm at School?, By Dolores Johnson (Published in 1990 by Macmillan). Ages: Preschool-K.

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

Jarrett, Joyce. (1995). *Teens' Children: Charting Their Progress through Research.*

The Teenage Mothers Project (TMP) in Jamaica, sponsored by the Bernard van Leer Centre for Early Childhood Education of the University of West Indies, seeks to act as an intervention for the teenage mothers involved, giving them the opportunity to complete their schooling; develop practical, marketable skills; and learn to be better mothers. While mothers attend the center, their children attend a stimulating, nurturing day care, supervised by trained caregivers. This aspect of the program, aside from giving mothers time for personal development, was designed to meet the children's needs and reverse the continuation of the problem into succeeding generations. An assessment of developmental outcomes for TMP children was conducted using the McCarthy Scales of Children's Abilities (MSCA). The test measures verbal and perceptual performance, and quantitative, general cognitive, memory, and motor skills. TMP children and a control group were first tested in 1989, then again in 1990 and 1991 after 2 years of school. Data indicated that the program's philosophy of early stimulation and a favorable learning environment was successful in providing children with developmental advantages that have long-term effects on their learning capabilities. PS026230

Teenage Mothers Project
Centre for Early Childhood Education
University of the West Indies
Mona, Kingston 7
Jamaica
Telephone: 809-927-2456

Brown, Brett V. (1993). *Family Functioning and Adolescent Behavior Problems: An Analysis of the National Survey of Families and Households.*

This study used data from the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH) to explore the relationship between family functioning and adolescent behavior problems. The data covered five family types: married, two-biological parent families (TP); stepfamilies; divorced/separated female-headed families (DSF); never married female-headed families (NM); and single male-headed families. The total sample included over 2,300 households with adolescents between 12 and 18 years old. Data were collected through in-person surveys and self-administered questionnaires completed by respondent and spouse. Findings indicated that there was significant variation across family types in the ways in which family functioning measures related to adolescent behavior problems, with measures operating poorly for NM families. The TP families generally scored higher than other types on family strength measures. One-parent families attempted to compensate by reaching out to extended kin, friends, and neighbors, although these activities were not related to reduced adolescent behavior problems. Internal measures of family functioning were more important than external measures of family functioning in predicting adolescent problem behaviors. Marital conflict and depression were very powerful predictors of adolescent behavior problems in two-biological parent families, and marital conflict was a powerful predictor in step-families. Family functioning measures were about equal in predictive power to sociodemographic measures in predicting two of the three behavior problem measures. There were clear differences in the level of reporting by parent. (Seven tables detail findings. An appendix provides definitions of measures. Contains 15 references.) PS026177

Child Trends, Inc.
4301 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20008
Telephone: 202-362-5580
Fax: 202-362-5533
Internet: http://www.childtrends.org/

Olsen, Darcy. (1997). *The Advancing Nanny State: Why the Government Should Stay Out of Child Care.*

In October, 1997 at the White House Conference on Child Care, the Clinton administration announced several initiatives to expand federal control over day care. This policy paper contends that federal initiatives of this type are misguided because they seriously misread the true state of child care in the United States. In response to advocacy groups that claim that there is a shortage of child care facilities, that they are unaffordable, and that unregulated day care harms children, this paper argues that almost all parents are satisfied with their child care arrangements, that child care fees have not changed in real terms since the late 1970s, and that the number of providers has kept pace with the demand. Further, the National Day Care Home Study found no indication that unregulated family day care is harmful to children. Rather, family day care caters successfully to the diverse needs of the children in care. This paper is critical of the suggestion that national standards are needed for child care and notes that the debate turns on the definition of quality, which has been defined by President Clinton in terms of accreditation, wages, and funding levels rather than results and impact on children. Given these facts--that parents are satisfied with their children's care and that high-quality care is both available and affordable even for low-income parents--this paper contends that Congress should resist attempts to increase child care funding and to impose federal standards on providers and parents. (Contains approximately 50 references.) PS026211
($6 each; 5 or more copies, $3 each)

Cato Institute
1000 Massachusetts Ave. NW
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Fax: 202-842-3490
Internet: http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa-285es.html

The ABC's of Quality Child Care: Parent Handbook. (1996)

This booklet for Oklahoma parents provides guidelines for selecting a child care setting that best suits the child, the family, and the work situation. It delineates 13 steps in choosing a child care arrangement and lists child care options such as centers, family day care homes, and in-home care arrangements. The role of state licensing is discussed and the responsibilities of licensing representatives are explained. A checklist for parents to use to assess a potential child care setting for their child includes the areas of supervision, caregivers, daily activities, health and safety, nutrition, guidance and discipline, infant and toddler care, and arrangements for children with special needs. Warning signs indicating a poor quality setting are also described. Suggestions for preparing children for entering a new child care setting are included, and the importance of continued parental involvement in child care is highlighted. Included are ways parents can respond to suspected child abuse in a child care setting, strategies for reducing childhood illnesses, and general tips for a successful child care experience. A list of resources concludes the booklet. PS025930

Department of Human Services
Office of Child Care
P.O. Box 25352
Oklahoma City, OK 73125
Telephone: 405-521-3561; 800-347-2276

Macy, Christina, & Jehl, Jeanne. (1997). ***Partnerships for Stronger Families: Building Intergovernmental Partnerships to Improve Results for Children and Families. Special Report No. 9.***

The Clinton administration's Partnerships for Stronger Families initiative, through working meetings, site visits, and outreach efforts, aimed to promote an ongoing conversation between those working on the front lines of services for children and families and those crafting federal policy and legislation in Washington. The initiative was guided by the vision that government must invest in prevention and early intervention programs for children, serve whole families, and measure success by results, not by numbers of dollars spent or people served. This report summarizes the initiative's work and recommendations. The first chapter of the report, "A Federal Focus on Families," includes sections detailing the 1994 meeting to launch the initiative, the progress noted at the March 1996 meeting, and further objectives devised at the December 1996 meeting. The second chapter, "A New Framework: Building Partnerships for Results," includes the following sections: (1) "Build Effective Partnerships" (including providing strong support from the top, helping communities and states gain access to the federal government, building communication with communities and states, restructuring federal technical assistance to build local capacity and strengthen partnerships); (2) "Ensure Increased Accountability for Results" (including developing national indicators to measure and track the well-being of America's children, and making federal programs more flexible). The third chapter, "Looking Ahead," outlines priorities for federal, state, and local action, for nongovernmental organizations and private foundations, and the role of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) Policy Exchange. The report's appendices include topics discussed at the December 1996 meeting, the Executive Order on Child and Family Statistics, and a list of participants at the December meeting. PS025898

Annie E. Casey Foundation
701 St. Paul St.
Baltimore, MD 21202
Telephone: 410-547-6600
Internet: http://www.aecf.org/

America Goes Back to School: Partner's Activity Kit. (1997)

"America Goes Back to School" is a nationwide initiative of parents, educators, and community leaders who have become actively involved in improving education in their communities. This "partner's activity kit" is intended to raise public awareness about what students in the schools need, and describes ways that everyone in the community can fill a role in improving education. The kit contains several sections, including: (1) encouraging local and state lawmakers to issue proclamations and resolutions; (2) working with the media; (3) starting local partnerships and connecting with the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education; and (4) bringing the community together to learn more about timely issues in education through the U.S. Department of Education's Satellite Town Meetings. The kit includes examples of how various community groups work to improve learning and a section on President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education. This section contains: the Call to Action and discussion of answering the Call to Action, including information on safe and drug-free schools, reading, preparation for college, and family involvement; a proposed checklist for principals and a school team to begin implementing the Call to Action; and a sample Call to Action poster. PS025844

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education
600 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20202

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Resources for Parents

Book Summaries and Reviews

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1. Weissberg, Roger P., Ed.; Gullotta, Thomas P., Ed.; Hampton, Robert L., Ed.; Ryan, Bruce A., Ed.; & Adams, Gerald R., Ed. (1997). ***Establishing Preventive Services. Healthy Children 2010. Issues in Children's and Families' Lives, Volume 9.*** **Sage Publications, Inc., 2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320; telephone: 805-499-0721; fax: 805-499-0871; email: info@sagepub.com (cloth, $59.95; paper, $27.95. Add $3.50 shipping).**

Today's young people face greater risks to their current and future health and social development, as shown by involvement of younger and younger children in risk-taking behaviors. This volume emphasizes developmentally and contextually appropriate prevention service delivery models and identifies state-of-the-art, empirically based strategies to strengthen the environments in which children develop. The nine chapters review ways to strengthen the family, child-care systems, early childhood education, school-based health and mental health services, and community-based mental health programming. The importance of theory-guided evaluation to clarify the process of program implementation is explored, and strategies are highlighted for disseminating programs effectively. The nine articles include: (1) "Introduction and Overview: Prevention Services--From Optimistic Promise to Widespread, Effective Practice" (Weissberg, Kuster, and Gullotta); (2) "Policy Efforts To Enhance Child and Family Life: Goals for 2010" (Zigler and Finn-Stevenson); (3) "Defining and Implementing School Readiness: Challenges for Families, Early Care and Education, and Schools" (Kagan and Neuman); (4) "Schools and the Enhancement of Children's Wellness: Some Opportunities and Some Limiting Factors" (Cowen); (5) "Mental Health Services for Children and Adolescents" (Rotheram-Borus); (6) "Improving Access to Health Care: School-Based Health Centers" (Dowden, and others); (7) "Evaluation of Prevention Programs for Children" (Valente and Dodge); (8) "Making Prevention Work" (Gottfredson, and others); and (9) "Reinterpreting Dissemination of Prevention Programs as Widespread Implementation with Effectiveness and Fidelity." PS026123

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2. Gerber, Magda, & Johnson, Allison. (1998). ***Your Self-Confident Baby: How to Encourage Your Child's Natural Abilities from the Very Start*****. John Wiley and Sons, Inc., Professional, Reference and Trade Group, 605 Third Ave., New York, NY 10158-0012; telephone: 212-850-6000; fax: 212-850-6088; email: jmccarth@wiley.com (U.S., $14.95; Canada, $20.95).**

Suggesting that if we treat children respectfully from birth, they may have a better chance of gaining confidence and developing good judgment, this book aims to help parents and those who work with babies and young children to understand the children. This goal is accomplished by teaching or "sensitizing" educarers to young children, since basic patterns of life such as trust, endurance, and optimism develop at an early age. Part I of the book summarizes RIE (Resources for Infant Educarers) philosophy, examining what is meant by respecting your baby and the baby respecting you, and explaining in detail the philosophy's basic principles and evolution. Part II takes an in-depth look at how to observe infants and how to apply RIE's basic principles in everyday situations. This section also examines the early developmental stages infants go through, from the newborn period until the baby takes his or her first steps. The section discusses issues such as crying, sleeping, safety, and play and how to use the RIE approach in handling them. Also included is a chapter on RIE's benefits for children with special needs, a chapter written especially for new parents, and a chapter on how to choose the best child care situation. Part III continues discussing developmental stages, ending in the early toddler phase. Recurring issues such as sleeping and eating are examined, as well as new issues such as toddler behavior, discipline, and tantrums. Each chapter contains comments from parents, stories from the author's work with families, and anecdotes from RIE parent/infant guidance classes. (Contains 14 references and a list of available RIE material.) PS026226

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3. ***The Relevance of Montessori Today: Meeting Human Needs—Principles to Practice.*** **Proceeding of the AMI/USA National Conference (Bellevue, Washington, July 25-28, 1996). American Montessori International of the United States, Inc., 400 Alexander St., Rochester, NY 14607; telephone: 716-461-5920; fax: 461-0075; email: usaami3@aol.com**

This set of proceedings from the Association Montessori International (AMI/USA) 1996 conference contains the conference schedule and 20 presentations. The conference presentations are: (1) "The Dawning of Wisdom" (Montessori); (2) "The Support of Montessori Education to Human Potential" (Montanaro); (3) "Healthy Environment: Healthy Children: Healthy Culture" (Orion); (4) "Cosmic Education vs. the Public School Curriculum--Are the Two at Variance?" (Stephenson); (5) "The Atrium: Silence, Simplicity, Movement, Symbol and Joy" (Kaiel); (6) "Family Star--A Montessori Grassroots Early Headstart Initiative" (Urioste); (7) "Beyond the Basic Needs: Nurturing the Full Potential of the Upper Elementary Child" (Denton); (8) "Building the Elementary Program and Transitional Program Strategies" (Davidson); (9) "Practical Applications of Montessori in the Home" (Helfrich); (10) "An Approach to the Resolution of Conflicts in a Positive Way" (Dubovoy); (11) "Talking with Parents: Conferences and Communications" (Caudill); (12) "Dr. Maria Montessori--A Contemporary Educator?" (Stephenson); (13) "The Relevance of the Erdkinder Vision" (Davis); (14) "Maria Montessori Envisioned Physics as Part of the Environment" (Gebhardt-Seele); (15) "Montessori Research: Recent Trends" (Boehnlein); (16) "Children at Risk" (Richardson); (17) "The Child in the Family" (Fernando); (18) "Working with Your Assistant" (Helfrich); (19) "Montessori in the 21st Century" (Lillard); and (20) "Classroom Management--The Path to Normalization." PS026240

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4. Bergmann, Barbara R. (1996). ***Saving Our Children from Poverty: What the United States Can Learn from France.*** **Russell Sage Foundation, CUP Services, 750 Cascadilla St., P.O. Box 6525, Ithaca, NY 14851 ($34.95).**

This book asserts that public assistance programs--particularly in countries in Western Europe--have been demonstrated to relieve deprivation and ensure an acceptable standard of living for those nations' families. Contrasting the extensive child welfare programs offered by France with those of the United States, this book describes in detail an array of benefits offered by the French government that are available to both high- and low-income families. The comparison shows how the French government runs nursery schools, guarantees medical care, and creates strong incentives for parents to seek and hold jobs rather than remain on welfare, allowing a single mother who chooses to work to continue to receive substantial income supplements, housing assistance, subsidized health care, and access to low-cost child care. This book describes how an American mother who chooses to work loses most of her cash benefits and receives no government assistance with child care, resulting in nearly one in four American children living below the poverty line--a proportion that exceeds that of any other advanced nation. The book is divided into three parts comparing differences in programs and spending in France and America, describing French programs for child well-being, and describing past and proposed American programs for children. Following a descriptive list of 30 statistical tables, the book contains 8 chapters: (1) "How Two Countries Respond to Children's Needs"; (2) "Differences in Spending and Program Design"; (3) "Government Child-Care Program Design"; (4) "French Payments To Raise Children's Living Standards"; (5) "Medical Services for Child Well-Being in France"; (6) "American Programs for Children: Keeping Millions Deprived"; (7) "Reducing Child Poverty by Helping Working Parents"; and (8) "Can We Conquer Child Poverty in America through Political Action?" Each chapter contains extensive notes and references. PS024753

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5. Weissbourd, Richard. (1996). ***The Vulnerable Child: What Really Hurts America's Children and What We Can Do about It.*** **Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1 Jacob Way, Reading, MA 01867 ($22).**

This book examines the stereotypes and superficial categorizations of America's children in crisis, and discusses the nature of childhood disadvantage. Findings from interviews with children and professionals, and a reexamination of past and present research, reveal that most children at risk are not poor. The evidence suggests that factors such as chronic parental stress and depression have a more powerful influence on a child's fate than whether or not there are two parents in the home or whether or not the family lives below the poverty line. Studies show that relocation, social isolation, problems with hearing and vision, lack of opportunities for accomplishment, learning disabilities, and obesity are the subtle variables that profoundly affect the lives of children regardless of race or class. The first part of the book describes at-risk children in the United States and the second part offers suggestions for institutions related to children's success. The chapters of the book are: (1) "What Ever Happened to Huckleberry Finn?" discounting prevailing perceptions of disadvantaged children as drawn too narrowly; (2) "The Real Roots of Success and Failure," offering a complex model for determining children who are vulnerable; (3) "Families United," examining changing family structures; (4) "Looking Inside Families," looking at the quality of parenting, sibling relationships, and family patterns; (5) "The Roots of Gangs and Cliques"; (6) "Communities: More than Kind and Less than Kin"; (7) "The Troubles of Ghetto Children"; (8) "Why Our Efforts to Help Children Fail"; (9) "Healthy Starts," describing successes in child-care institutions; (10) "Schools That Work"; (11) "Even If the Boat Goes Down: Child Protective Services"; (12) "The Police," advocating community policing; and (13) "Beyond the Edifice Complex: What Cities Can Do." (Contains 18 references.) PS024754

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6. Harlan, Jean Durgin, & Quattrocchi, Carolyn Good. (1994). ***Science as It Happens!: Family Activities with Children Ages 4 to 8.*** **Henry Holt and Co., NY.**

Families like yours can make physical science come alive for young children--casually, with no pressure, as it happens around the house. With practical guidance from this fun-filled book, your child can launch into school science ready and eager to learn more. Even if you feel you don't know enough to introduce your child to science, this book will help you overcome your own "science phobia." All you need to enjoy fascinating learning experiences with your child are your child's natural curiosity, at-hand supplies, and this book. To reinforce learning, follow-up experiments and readings are suggested here, as is a list of children's science museums around the country.

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Organizations

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America works to make a positive difference in the lives of children and youth, through a professionally supported one-on-one relationship with a caring adult.

Contact:

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America
230 North 13th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Telephone: 215-567-7000
Fax: 215-567-0394
Email: bbbsa@aol.com

Coalition for America's Children

The Coalition for America's Children is a network of private and public agencies working to educate citizens about the problems children face. The Coalition seeks to make children a priority in their communities, and encourages collective community education.

Contact:

Coalition for America's Children
1634 I St., 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20006
Telephone: 202-638-5770
Fax: 202-638-5771

Gang Resistance Education and Training

Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) helps local police districts and schools develop programs that include: (1) learning how to resolve conflicts, avoiding peer pressure, setting personal goals; and (2) understanding cultural differences and how gangs impact the quality of life.

Contact:

Gang Resistance Education and Training
P.O. Box 50418
Washington, DC 20077-0091
Telephone: 202-565-4560
Fax: 202-565-4588
Email: great@atfhq.atf.treas.gov

National Indian Child Welfare Association

Founded in 1983, The National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) serves American Indian tribes across the country by helping them strengthen and enhance their capacity to deliver quality child welfare services. Major activities include: helping tribes conduct needs assessments, program design, and development; providing workshops and training programs on culturally appropriate training materials, curricula, books, pamphlets, posters, and public service announcements; defending the Indian Child Welfare Act; enhancing tribal access to funding sources; and maintaining a library of over 2,800 books and articles on child welfare and family issues. The organization publishes *NICWA News,* which is their quarterly newsletter, and *Pathways,* a bi-monthly newsletter on issues in Indian child welfare.

Contact:

National Indian Child Welfare Association
3611 SW Hood St., Suite 201
Portland, OR 97201
Telephone: 503-222-4044
Fax: 503-222-4007

Neighborhood Education Watch

The Neighborhood Education Watch (NEW) is a new program sponsored by the Quality Education for Minorities Network. NEW is designed to mobilize individuals, community groups, and businesses to actively promote and support quality education in their communities and neighborhoods. Central to NEW's philosophy is the idea that every resident, regardless of his/her level of education or training, and every organization, regardless of its size and resources, can play a role in ensuring quality education for every child.

Contact:

Community Outreach and Leadership Development
The Quality Education for Minorities Network
1818 N St. NW, Suite 350
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-659-1818
Fax: 202-659-5408
Internet: http://qemnetwork.qem.org/

Parents Leadership Institute

Parents Leadership Institute develops listening, parenting, and leadership skills in parents and those dedicated to parents and children. Booklets, videotapes, and audiotapes on listening, parent-to-parent and parent-to-child, are available in English, Spanish, and other languages. They provide leadership training for parents who want to lead parent support groups, and who lead parent organizations. Talks, workshops, and classes for parents are offered in five San Francisco Bay Area counties. Training and workshops in other locations are available by request.

Contact:

Parents Leadership Institute
P.O. Box 50492
Palo Alto, CA 94303
Telephone: 650-322-LEAD
Fax: 650-322-5179
Internet: http://www.parentleaders.org/

The Television Project

Founded in 1993, The Television Project conducts workshops designed to raise awareness of the ways television affects families, and promotes alternatives and strategies for controlling television use. Workshops are research-based, and are tailored to the particular audience (parents, professionals, etc.) and circumstance. The Television Project also publishes a quarterly publication called *Beyond TV*.

Contact:

The Television Project
11160 Veirs Mill Rd., Suite 277
Wheaton, MD 20902
Telephone: 301-588-4001
Email: 76507.1755@compuserv.com

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Newsletters/Magazines

Teaching PreK - 8

This magazine is published 8 months out of the year by a subsidiary of Highlights for Children and focuses on assisting the PreK - 8 teacher with specific teaching ideas. A recent issue includes articles on teaching fiction, increasing students' vocabulary, report cards, integrating biking into the curriculum, note-taking techniques, parent conferences, buddy programs, and hot teaching tips. Regular departments include teaching in all the major subject areas including math, science, technology, language arts, art, and working with diverse learners. Cost is $23.97 per year.

For more information:

Teaching PreK - 8
P.O. Box 54808
Boulder, CO 80328-4808

FairTest Examiner

Published by the national Center for Fair and Open Testing, this quarterly newsletter examines a variety of issues that affect K-12 students. A recent issue includes topics on testing reform, the national debate over testing, improving portfolio use, whether or not testing improves learning, and gender issues in testing.

For more information:

The National Center for Fair and Open Testing
342 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02129-1802
Telephone: 617-864-4810
Email: fairtest@aol.com

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NETWorking: Other Gopher and WWW Sites to Visit

Name: LimiTV

Description: LimiTV is a non-profit North Carolina corporation formed in 1995 to educate parents, teachers, and children about the many ways excessive television viewing can damage a child's ability to learn, and to recommend alternatives to excessive television viewing. On its site, LimiTV offers information on the influence of TV, suggestions for alternatives to TV, and a resource list of related materials.

Address: http://www.limitv.org/
(Editors note: The URL for this site has been changed. 8/31/98)

Name: National Network for Collaborations

Sponsor: CYFERNET

Description: The purpose of the National Network for Collaborations is to create an environment that fosters collaboration and leads to citizen problem-solving to improve the lives of children, youth, and families. Several full-text collaboration resources are available on this site.

Address: http://crs.uvm.edu/nnco/

Name: Family Life Library

Sponsor: Kansas State University Research and Extension

Description: This site is an online library of publications related to family life written by faculty members of the Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station and the Kansas Cooperative Extension Service. Topics include: family celebrations, child care, developmental milestones, and managing work and family issues. In addition, the *Stepping Stones for Stepfamilies* series is available online.

Address: http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/PUB/LIBRARY/famlife/famlfpub.htm

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Name: National Inhalant Prevention Coalition (NIPC)

Description: NIPC is a public-private effort to promote awareness and recognition of the under-publicized problem of inhalant use. The NIPC serves as an inhalant referral and information clearinghouse, develops informational materials, and provides training and technical assistance. The Web site offers information on the dangers of inhalant abuse, characteristics of users, tips for teachers, and the *Viewpoint* newsletter. In addition, links to relevant research, foundations, and international organizations are provided.

Address: http://www.inhalants.org/

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Conference Calendar

Note: Only new conferences not previously listed in Parent News are included in this issue. For a full listing of conferences, workshops, and other parenting-related events, go to the PARENTING Calendar section of NPIN.

Conference: 2nd Annual Jeanne M. Priester Conference: Pre-Conference to the National Conference on Rural Health

Sponsor: National Network for Health

Date: May 12-13, 1998

Place: Hyatt Regency Orlando Hotel, Orlando, Florida

Description: This pre-conference will provide the opportunity to workshop with other Extension Health Promotion/Policy and Community Development Specialists from across the country. Topics on the agenda will include:

- Emerging Issues...Trends in Health for Families
- Insurance Programs for Children
- Healthy Families, Healthy Communities...A New Initiative

Contact:

Judith Hackney
National Network for Health
Project Manager
Telephone: 919-515-8475 OR 919-515-3242
Fax: 919-515-7812
E-mail: judith_hackney@ncsu.edu
Internet: http://www.nnh.org/program/Conference2.htm

Conference: 1998 Working Women's Wellness Summit

Sponsor: World of Wellness Institute

Date: June 4-6, 1998

Place: Breckenridge Hilton Lodge and Conference Center, Breckenridge, Colorado

Description: In a variety of formats, participants will explore mind, body, and spirit aspects of wellness that women who work have in common. Twenty sessions, led by renowned wellness and organizational effectiveness professionals, will cover a vast range of health and work-related topics. Each participant will take back customized action plans and a resource guide for improving personal and organizational health for women in their workplaces.

Contact:

World of Wellness Institute
Telephone: 888-371-4192
Fax: 303-371-4776
Email: worldofw@aol.com
Internet: http://www.wellnessnwi.org/wrd/queries/pages/1117/
Editorial Note (6/15/98): Since the 1998 Working Women's Wellness Summit has now passed, this web page is no longer functional. For other conference information, visit The National Wellness Institute's home page at http://www.welnessnwi.org/.

Conference: Start Early: Raising Kids Who Care

Sponsor: Voices for Illinois Children and Zero to Three: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families

Date: June 5, 1998

Place: The Standard Club, Chicago, Illinois

Description: The Start Early: Raising Kids Who Care conference will focus on how early brain development shapes children's futures and will explore the relationship between children's early experiences and their emotional, social, and cognitive development. The keynote speaker will be Robin Karr-Morse, who is the co-author of *Ghosts from the Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence.*

Contact:

Joan Vitale
Project Director, Voices for Illinois Children
Telephone: 312-456-0600
E-mail: vitale_joan@voices4kids.org

Conference: Common Sense Parenting: Training for Parent Trainers

Sponsor: Boys Town USA National Resource and Training Center

Date: June 16-17, 1998

Place: Phoenix, Arizona

Description: This four-day Training for Parent Trainers prepares participants to conduct the Boys Town Common Sense Parenting classes in their own community. Learn how to integrate the effective skills and practical strategies of the Boys Town Model into your current programs.

Contact:

NRTC
Telephone: 800-545-5771
Email: NRTC@boystown.org

Conference: Born to Learn^{TM} International Conference

Sponsor: Parents as Teachers National Center

Date: June 27-30, 1998

Place: Hyatt Regency Union Station, St. Louis, Missouri

Description: The Parents as Teachers National Center is hosting its seventh annual international conference for early childhood and parenting professionals. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to hear speakers, attend skill-building workshops, and network. More than 70 presentations will be available on such topics as neuroscience research, program management, public policy, and family challenges.

Contact:

Patti Holman
Parents as Teachers National Center
10176 Corporate Square Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63132
Telephone: 314-432-4330
Fax: 312-432-8963
Email: patnc@patnc.org
Internet: http://www.patnc.org/

Conference: Smart Marriages/Happy Families Conference

Sponsor: Coalition for Marriage, Family and Couples Education

Date: July 8-12, 1998

Place: Gateway Crystal Marriott, Washington, DC

Description: The Smart Marriages/Happy Families Conference gathers the experts to share the latest innovations in the field of marriage and family education. The conference welcomes counselors, therapists, clergy, family life educators, lay leaders, policy makers, journalists, and the public.

Contact:

CMFCE c/o MACC, Inc.
P.O. Box 513
Colmar, PA 18915-0513
Telephone: 215-822-6319
Fax: 215-822-3332
Email: maccinc@enter.net
Internet: http://www.smartmarriages.com/conference_details.html

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Conference: Equity, Accountability, and Assessment

Sponsor: National Coalition of Education Activists

Date: July 30-August 2, 1998

Place: Marriot Metro Center, Washington, DC

Description: The National Coalition of Education Activists (NCEA) is a multi-racial organization of parents, teachers, union and community activists, child advocates, and others working for fundamental changes in local school districts. Its purpose is to help and encourage local activists in their efforts to develop, promote, and implement progressive school reforms. This conference is intended for parents, school staff, community and union activists, and children's activists.

Contact:

Debi Duke
NCEA
P.O. Box 679
Rhinebeck, NY 12572
Telephone: 914-876-4580
Email: rfbs@aol.com

Conference: Tenth Annual International CH.A.D.D. Conference on Attention Deficit Disorders

Sponsor: Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders (CH.A.D.D.)

Date: October 15-17, 1998

Place: New York Hilton and Towers, New York, New York

Description: The Annual International Conference of CH.A.D.D. is the major research, practice, and public information conference dedicated to issues related to ADD. The Tenth Annual International Conference will bring together researchers, clinicians, educators, parents, and adults with ADD. Major goals of the conference are to disseminate the latest developments in research, diagnosis, and treatment; to facilitate an ongoing exchange about issues related to ADD by individuals with different experiences and viewpoints; and to increase public understanding of the disorder.

Contact:

CH.A.D.D.
499 Northwest 70th Ave., Suite 101
Plantation, FL 33317
Telephone: 954-587-3700
Internet: http://www.chadd.org/conf98.htm

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National Parent Information Network

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  by Anne S. Robertson
- Community Spotlight:
  The Changing Roles of Fathers
- Of Interest:
  - *Ways of Thinking about AD/HD* by Joyce Sousa, MA/LCPC
  - *Speech Development in the Infant and Toddler* by Debbie Reese
  - *Children's Attitudes about Older Adults* by Debbie Reese
  - *Upcoming Satellite Conferences of Interest to Parents and Parent Educators*
  - *Study Aims to Help Answer "What is Normal Sexual Behavior in Young Children?"*
  - *Children and Sports: Don't Forget to Practice Sportsmanship!* by Dawn Ramsburg
  - *Children's Books*
- Resources for Parents:
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Parent News Editorial Information

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Production Editor: Emily S. Van Hyning

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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
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Parent News for June 1998

What's New on NPIN

For a listing and description of items that are new on NPIN over the last three months, see the What's New on NPIN section on the NPIN Home Page.

What's New: Resources added to NPIN during May 1998

Several new items have been added to several topical areas in the Resources for Parents / Full Text of Parenting-Related Materials section.

In the Children and the Media section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Getting Online: A Friendly Guide for Teachers, Students, and Parents*
  This publication from the staff of the ERIC system, sponsored by the Department of Education, is designed to help teachers, students, parents, and others "get online" as well as to help these populations discover educational materials on the internet more easily and successfully.
- *The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage*
  This publication addresses many questions about how parents can use television to enhance their children's education throughout childhood. Specific strategies are given for parents regarding how to use television constructively. Topics such as violence, commercials, and real vs. pretend are discussed, and three appendices include publications, references, organizations, and other resources for parents.

In the Early Childhood: Learning section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *How Can We Strengthen Children's Self-Esteem?*
  This Parent Brochure from ACCESS ERIC defines self-esteem and discusses its importance in the development of healthy, stable children. The brochure also lists several points which might be helpful in strengthening and supporting a healthy sense of self-esteem in children.
- *Why, How, and When Should My Child Learn a Second Language?*
  This Parent Brochure from ACCESS ERIC answers many of the most common questions regarding the acquisition of a second language in children. Topics such as the benefits of knowing a second language, how languages are taught to children, and how parents can help maximize the experience for their children are explored.
- *Achieving the Goals, Goal 8: Parental Involvement and Participation*
  This publication from the Department of Education provides a compendium of education programs across the federal government, providing education reformers and the general public a useful tool for seeking funding for activities related to achieving the National Education Goals. The publication is organized by education topic, so that interested people and organizations can easily match their needs and concerns with the topics listed. The appendix offers lists of state and local points of contact for various activities.

In the Helping Children Learn at Home section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage*
  This publication addresses many questions about how parents can use television to enhance their children's education throughout childhood. Specific strategies are given for parents regarding how to use television constructively. Topics such as violence, commercials, and real vs. pretend are discussed, and three appendices include publications, references, organizations, and other resources for parents.

In the Older Children, Pre-Teens, and Early Adolescents section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *How Can We Support Girls in Early Adolescence?*
  This Parent Brochure from ACCESS ERIC discusses the effects of self-image and body image on pre-adolescent and adolescent girls' academic achievement. The brochure also lists strategies for parents, teachers, and administrators which can prevent future problems as well as provide support and encouragement to girls whose self-concept and/or academic achievement may be suffering.
- *Why, How, and When Should My Child Learn a Second Language?*
  This Parent Brochure from ACCESS ERIC answers many of the most common questions regarding the acquisition of a second language in children. Topics such as the benefits of knowing a second language, how languages are taught to children, and how parents can help maximize the experience for their children are explored.
- *A Guide to Youth Smoking Prevention Policies and Programs*
  This Parent Guide from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education provides many policies, programs, and practices for schools, communities, and families to combat youth smoking. Specific points which are important to include in anti-smoking education campaigns are also provided.

In the Parents and Schools as Partners section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *How Can We Strengthen Children's Self-Esteem?*
  This Parent Brochure from ACCESS ERIC defines self-esteem and discusses its importance in the development of healthy, stable children. The brochure also lists several points which might be helpful in strengthening and supporting a healthy sense of self-esteem in children.
- *Getting Online: A Friendly Guide for Teachers, Students, and Parents*
  This publication from the staff of the ERIC system, sponsored by the Department of Education, is designed to help teachers, students, parents, and others "get online" as well as to help these populations discover educational materials on the internet more easily and successfully.
- *Achieving the Goals, Goal 8: Parental Involvement and Participation*
  This publication from the Department of Education provides a compendium of education programs across the federal government, providing education reformers and the general public a useful tool for seeking funding for activities related to achieving the National Education Goals. The publication is organized by education topic, so that interested people and organizations can easily match their needs and concerns with the topics listed. The appendix offers lists of state and local points of contact for various activities.
- *How to Recognize and Develop Your Children's Special Talents*
  This Parent Guide from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education provides families with information on how they can develop their children's talents at home, as well as how they can work

with schools toward the same goals. A section on multicultural gifted programs is also included.

- *A Guide to Enrollment and Success in Charter Schools*
  This Parent Guide from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education answers many common questions regarding charter schools, including questions about finding charter schools; application and admission procedures and requirements; and specific questions which parents should ask during the process of searching for a charter school.
- *A Guide to Creating a Parent Center in an Urban School*
  This Parent Guide from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education discusses the process of creating a parent center in an urban school. Qualities of a good center are discussed, as well as specific strategies for identifying and recruiting needs and resources, including families, staff, and potential projects and activities for the center.

In the Teens (14-20) section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *How Can We Support Girls in Early Adolescence?*
  This Parent Brochure from ACCESS ERIC discusses the effects of self-image and body image on pre-adolescent and adolescent girls' academic achievement. The brochure also lists strategies for parents, teachers, and administrators which can prevent future problems as well as provide support and encouragement to girls whose self-concept and/or academic achievement may be suffering.
- *A Guide to Youth Smoking Prevention Policies and Programs*
  This Parent Guide from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education provides many policies, programs, and practices for schools, communities, and families to combat youth smoking. Specific points which are important to include in anti-smoking education campaigns are also provided.

Reviews or summaries of the following parenting-related books were added to the Parenting Resources: Books section of NPIN:

- *Establishing Preventive Services. Healthy Children 2010. Issues in Children's and Families' Lives, Volume 9,* by Roger P. Weissberg, Thomas P. Gullotta, Robert L. Hampton, Bruce A. Ryan, and Gerald R. Adams.
- *Your Self-Confident Baby: How to Encourage Your Child's Natural Abilities from the Very Start,* by Magda Gerber and Allison Johnson.
- *The Relevance of Montessori Today: Meeting Human Needs-Principles to Practice,* from the AMI/USA National Conference.
- *Saving Our Children from Poverty: What the United States Can Learn from France,* by Barbara R. Bergmann.
- *The Vulnerable Child: What Really Hurts America's Children and What We Can Do about It,* by Richard Weissbourd.
- *Science as It Happens!: Family Activities with Children Ages 4 to 8,* by Jean Durgin Harlan and Carolyn Good Quattrocchi.

Information on the following parenting-related organizations was added to the Resources for Those Who Work with Parents: Organizations section of NPIN:

- Big Brother/Big Sister of America
- Coalition for America's Children

- Gang Resistance Education and Training
- National Indian Child Welfare Association
- Neighborhood Education Watch
- Parents Leadership Institute
- The Television Project

Information on the following parenting-related newsletters was added to the Parenting Resources: Newsletters section of NPIN:

- *FairTest Examiner*
- *Teaching PreK-8*

Several new links to Internet resources were added in the Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents section.

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June's Feature

The Parenting Education Spectrum: A Look at the Scope of Parenting Programs that Should Be Available within a Community

by Anne S. Robertson

The National Parent Information Network (NPIN) is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and is a project of the ERIC Clearinghouse system, which serves educators worldwide. NPIN is an Internet-based information network for parents, and for organizations and individuals who support parents, but NPIN's information services are also available via our toll-free telephone number or by U.S. mail.

Lisbeth Schorr, in her new book *Common Purpose: Strengthening Families and Neighborhoods to Rebuild America,* expands on the *Seven Attributes of Highly Effective Programs. Those attributes include:*

- Successful programs are comprehensive, flexible, responsive, and persevering.
- Successful programs see children in the context of their families.
- Successful programs deal with families as parts of neighborhoods and communities.
- Successful programs have a long-term preventative orientation, a clear mission, and continue to evolve over time.
- Successful programs are well managed by competent and committed individuals with clearly identifiable skills.
- Staffs of successful programs are trained and supported to provide high-quality, responsive services.
- Successful programs operate in settings that encourage practitioners to build strong relationships based on mutual trust and respect.

At ERIC and the National Parent Information Network (NPIN), we continue to examine better ways to serve parents and professionals who work with parents, given our mission and the resources available to us. What can we do? What are our limits?

Certainly, information gathering, storing, and sharing are the foundation of the ERIC system and NPIN, but a cornerstone of that foundation is collaboration with a wide variety of individuals, agencies, and organizations. We work very hard to listen to what is needed in the field, and our acquisitions, services, and projects are developed to support those information and resource needs.

One of those services, Parents AskERIC, has grown rapidly and has challenged us to look at the level of parent support we can and cannot provide well from our location. Through Parents AskERIC, parents, or professionals who work with parents, ask a wide variety of questions on topics such as child development, parenting education, health, or school-related issues (see Figure 1).

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sibling rivalry
toilet training
divorce
custody issues
benchmarks in child development
aggressive behavior
positive discipline
program development
choosing a school
health-related questions

parental involvement
special needs children
father involvement
home schooling
retention issues
family communication
adolescent behavior
substance abuse
resources for gifted children
family literacy

Figure 1. Parenting question topics.

Each question receives an individual response, which typically includes citations from our database, a list of relevant parenting materials and organizations, and encouragement to link to community-based resources. With over 50,000 parenting education programs available throughout the United States (Carter, 1996, p. 4), it has been helpful for us to identify those programs by using what we have called "The Parenting Education Spectrum" (see Figure 2). As we respond to parenting questions, we can look at how that response fits into the spectrum, being careful not to move beyond our scope and mission.

Resource and Referral	***Suggestions/ Strategies***	***Community Programs***	***Formal Instruction***	***Counseling***
Includes: • Research • Books • Organizations • Web sites • Full text	suggesting a phrase or strategy to assist the parent or professional	informal programs offered through schools, hospitals, religious groups (e.g., MOPS)	formal programs offered through school districts, hospitals (e.g., early intervention)	counseling & one-to-one support for parents (e.g., home visiting)

Figure 2. Parenting education spectrum.

The spectrum may also help communities understand what support is currently being provided, and it can help them discover where there may be gaps in service delivery. Identifying those weak areas, through a community-wide needs assessment, may be useful for designating the parenting support services that may be most needed within a neighborhood.

Divided into five major sections, at the left end of the spectrum are programs that provide information, resource, and referral. As we move along the spectrum, we see that the programs in the next section may provide a strategy or suggestion to the parent. In the middle are informal parenting programs that may be run by volunteers and may meet in community locations, such as a church, synagogue, or family center. These informal programs are important networks that support families and build relationships. As we move to the other end of the spectrum, we see that the parenting education gradually becomes more intensive and one-to-one, until at the opposite end are programs that include such models as home visiting and counseling.

While all parents may need access to the entire spectrum of parenting education during their parenting experience, it is very difficult for one organization to provide the complete range of services effectively. ERIC and the National Parent Information Network fit into the far left side of the spectrum by providing information, resources, and referrals. We may also suggest a strategy and, if necessary, try and provide parents with a link to a program within their own community that fits into another category in the parenting education spectrum. From our location, it is impossible for us to provide the type of support required for more intensive parenting education. These types of services are best accomplished by community-based programs since the staff can develop a one-to-one relationship with the family. Our hope is that by increasing access to relevant, high-quality research and resources, at the time the resources are most needed, parents and professionals who work with parents will become more competent in their roles and feel more capable when reaching out to help others within their community.

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Community Spotlight

The Changing Roles of Fathers

"A marketing manager parks in a back lot, away from the boss's office, so that at 5:30 when it is time to leave to pick up daughter Suzie at daycare, no one will think the manager is uncommitted to the job" (Levine & Pittinsky, 1997, p. 31).

The situation described here may sound similar to the stories that often appear in the media about working mothers as they struggle to meet the demands of work and family. It may come as a surprise, however, to learn that this quote is about a working father. Just as working moms are increasingly struggling to achieve a balance between home and family, working dads are searching for ways not only to fulfill their breadwinner role but also their role as a parent. The concerns of fathers are less often made public--either because the fathers try to hide their commitment to their family for fear of negative consequences at work, or because society ignores the importance of fathers when discussing parenting.

It is important that we do not underestimate the role of fathers in the lives of their families, however, as there were just over 25 million fathers in the United States with a child under age 18 in their household in 1995 (Levine & Pittinsky, 1997). Just like their own fathers, these dads share a desire to be a breadwinner for the family--96 percent were employed. However, these fathers differ from their fathers in that they no longer define being a good father exclusively in terms of their ability to provide economically (Levine & Pittinsky, 1997). In today's American society, being a good father also means "having a close relationship with their children," or "being involved in their children's lives." In addition, according to a 1991 Gallup poll, 59 percent of American men derive a greater satisfaction from caring for their family than from a job well done at work (Levine & Pittinsky, 1997).

Work-Family Conflict: Not Just a Women's Issue

Over the last 20 years, much of our focus has been on the consequences of mothers returning to work. Researchers have examined the consequences of maternal employment, the effects of daycare, and the effects on the marital relationship when mothers are working. We seldom hear about the impact of fathers working on the family. This is partly because of a societal expectation that fathers must be the breadwinners for the family. Yet, as researchers begin to look more closely at working fathers, they find that fathers increasingly want the ability to both provide for and spend time with their children (Levine & Pittinsky, 1997).

In addition, researchers also find that fathers often suffer from many of the same work-family conflicts as those reported about working mothers. In 1993, the Families and Work Institute conducted the *National Study of the Changing Workforce*. In its report, it found when looking at work-family conflict in families where both parents worked full-time, there was no significant difference between mothers and fathers (Levine & Pittinsky, 1997). When focusing on the amount of conflict experienced by fathers, results showed that nearly one-fifth reported a lot of conflict and two-fifths reported some conflict (total of 60 percent). In addition, in this study it did not matter to fathers whether mothers worked full-time, part-time, or not at all. Moreover, in more traditional families where the mother stayed at home, 56 percent of fathers still reported feeling some or a lot of conflict (Levine & Pittinsky, 1997). These statistics suggest that the discussion of problems experienced by working parents should be expanded to include working fathers as well as working mothers.

Importance of Fathers

Research on fathers and father involvement has been increasing steadily over the past few years. One of the most influential series of studies on fathering was conducted by Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine in 1987. According to their framework, the three crucial components of fathering are interaction, availability, and responsibility. Different aspects of this framework have been explored further in other studies. For example, Pleck, now at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, has continued to examine the amount of time fathers spend with their children. He found between 1965 and 1986, fathers increased the time they spent with their children from 25 percent to 33 percent of the time that mothers spend with their children (Levine & Pittinsky, 1997). A 1997 report from the census, *My Daddy Takes Care of Me! Fathers as Care Providers* also explores fathers' time spent with their children while the mothers are at work (Casper, 1997). According to this report, in 1993, 1 in 5 fathers in married-couple families with children under age 15 provided care for at least one child while the mother was working.

Other researchers have explored how father involvement relates to children's development. Some studies find that fathers who are more involved with their children contribute much to their children's intellectual, social, and emotional development (Engle & Breaux, 1998). For example, the quality of the interaction between the child and the father has been found to be a better predictor of children's cognitive development than the overall amount of time spent with the child.

Personal Accounts

As we continue to learn more about the importance of fathers and as new expectations of fathers begin to emerge, we wanted to learn what some of the fathers on our PARENTING-L listserv had to say.

One father in Australia, who stays at home while his wife works, described how he works at being a father:

I am not a juggler. I tend to say no a lot. I am often asked to work and be involved in things and it is tempting to get involved as you 'aren't a man if you don't work.' I do get involved with my kids at school and in sports, but I've had to resist the temptation to be involved for the sake of being involved. I've had to work to rebuild fathering from scratch as I had bad role models or none. My Dad died when I was young so I can't just do it as dad did. . . not that I would want to.

Another father contributed a story he had written for his son's nursery school newsletter. He is a 40-something father of three boys living in California:

Because I said so!!!

Ever felt like stoning Mr. Rogers? Pounding Barney? I do. Don't get me wrong, the kiddie show hosts on public TV do a great job. They're endlessly huggable, the kids love them, and they send the right message. It's just that by the time I get finished being sensitive to my kids' needs, listening, responding *appropriately, acknowledging their emotions, I've had enough sensitivity for the day!*

...Sorry. I guess I kind of snapped. But, I'm exhausted. Being a perfect parent is hard work. I mean, I'm understanding, I'm sensitive, I'm omniscient, and I know ALL of the lyrics to "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood." And all of this isn't exactly second nature to me! I have to work at it! See, I was at the tail end of six kids, so I didn't grow up getting "heard" by my parents. In fact, I don't recall any of my emotional needs ever being met! I was told what to do, when to do it, and I did it or I would be punished. SIMPLE AS THAT!!

But, I'm not bitter. I'm aware that I'm part of a transitional generation in parenting. Without any historical reference whatsoever. I'm expected to master all of the parenting skills that will make my children emotionally whole. And by spending thousands of dollars practicing my theory that two hours of good parenting requires four hours of good psychiatry, I have learned that "Because I said so, dammit!" is often not the appropriate response to a toddler's meek query. But, does that mean that I have to be Mr. Rogers all the time!? Mr. Perfect Parent!?

Wait...Now that I think about it, maybe my son answered this question for me the other day. I'd had the mother of all bad days, a flat tire, a speeding ticket, a bad meeting, and my youngest had an ear infection. So, at the end of the day, when I told my middle boy to brush his teeth and he said, "In another lifetime, Dad," I blew, screaming that he better do it and he better do it now. Before he trundled off to the bathroom, he looked at me and almost smiled "Have a bad day?" He seemed to know that I could be a nutbag. And I was glad to know that my parenting had been GOOD ENOUGH that he could handle my irrational anger. . .

I was being human, and he was liking that. He preferred living with the human to living with the perfect parent.

The sentiment expressed by these two fathers is summed up in the following quote from researcher Joe Pleck, "What is perhaps most surprising is the persistence of the view that men are obsessed by their work and oblivious to their families. . . Overall, the picture emerging from recent literature on men in family roles is of men who are deeply connected to their families and whose subjective well-being is significantly related to the quality of these connections" (Levine & Pittinsky, 1997, p. 51).

Additional Resources

At-Home Dad
http://www.parentsplace.com/readroom/athomedad/index.html

Families and Work Institute
http://www.familiesandwork.org/

The Father's Forum
http://www.parentsplace.com/readroom/fathers/index.html

Fatherhood Project
http://www.fatherhoodproject.org/

Fathering Bibliography
http://hd.wsu.edu/publications/fathering/famenu.html

Fathermag
http://www.fathermag.com/

Fathernet
http://www.cyfc.umn.edu/Fathernet/index.html

National Centering for Fathering
http://www.fathers.com/

National Fatherhood Initiative
http://www.register.com/father/

National Fathers' Network
http://www.fathersnetwork.org/

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Of Interest

Ways of Thinking about AD/HD

by Joyce Sousa, MA/LCPC

At times it seems as though AD/HD has burst onto the scene as a major concern in the lives of a multitude of children and the adults who love and work with them. According to Dr. Dan Amen of The Amen Clinic in Fairfield, California, AD/HD is the most common learning problem among children and adolescents, affecting more than 17 million Americans--a neurological problem that, if left unaddressed, has serious learning, social, and emotional consequences. Though commonly regarded as a diagnosis attached to children and adolescents, AD/HD also occurs in adults.

As sometimes happens with such issues, confusion exists around causes and treatment. Clearly we all don't have to speak in one voice--indeed different opinions and experiences can lead to a useful and productive discussion--but too many voices can create frustration and lack of direction for families and teachers. There are things that do work with AD/HD and that can bring relief to those struggling with the disruption this disorder can being into their lives.

A few basic facts about AD/HD. A diagnosis of AD/HD is not a diagnosis for chaos. It does signal certain challenges to be faced. Strange as it may seem, brain studies reveal that the individual with AD/HD experiences a decrease in brain activity in the frontal lobes in response to intellectual exercise. The more this individual tries to concentrate, the worse it gets. To compensate or correct this uncomfortable state of mind the individual seeks stimulation. This can be in the form of humming, increased activity level, or causing turmoil. AD/HD children repeatedly get others upset with them even though there seems to be no positive outcome for this behavior. A common fallacy is that children with AD/HD outgrow this disorder. This is not true. Though the hyperactivity may lessen as a component for most individuals, impulsivity, distractibility, and short attention span remain into adulthood. Imagine, since there is a strong hereditary factor in AD/HD, how difficult it would be for an adult with these symptoms to parent an AD/HD child. Additional symptoms of adult AD/HD are poor organization, procrastination, and trouble listening to directions.

These adults' lives are often cluttered with missed appointments, lost items, anger, and lack of stability in employment, as well as financial difficulties. More serious problems are often present such as substance abuse and frequent traffic violations. A major difficulty is that this reads like a list of irresponsible behaviors, and we think of these behaviors as willful activities. Irresponsible behavior certainly can coexist with AD/HD. It may indeed develop quite easily if inappropriate structure and inappropriate demands lead to excuse-making and lack of follow-through. Those working and living with individuals diagnosed with AD/HD will be able to hold these individuals accountable with more confidence and consistency when expectations are in line with capabilities. It is particularly important to have expectations and accountability; the expectations need to be appropriate, and the consequences consistent.

Treatment. Medication can be a helpful part of the treatment and ought to be explored. Different medications, different doses, and different administration schedules are worth experimenting with until the most effective combination is found. But medication, if used, is only a part of the treatment. Another important component of treatment is providing structure. To help understand this, we can frame it in the following manner. We would never think of taking our children to school, dropping them off, and leaving them to spend six to eight hours in an unstructured setting. What we have come to think of as appropriate structure to help a child without AD/HD manage his/her time and activities and promote optimal learning and social development needs to be adjusted for children with AD/HD. We can apply the same principle but in smaller increments of time and with more frequent adult direction. If a 5-year-old needs more structure than a 7-year-old who needs more than a 12-year-old, an AD/HD child needs this even more.

Structure. Imagining a continuum of the amount of structure needed to promote self-efficacy helps us to be more effective in our response. Instead, we tend to frame the problems of AD/HD children as "deviant." We create another category. It is important to recognize this because it affects how we think about our response and the help we design. Much as we would not expect a 6-year-old to handle constructively an entire day undirected, let alone punish him/her for not doing so, a youngster with AD/HD may need help getting productively through an hour. Again, much as we would not expect an 8-year-old to follow through a series of successive steps to achieve a distant goal, children with AD/HD need larger tasks broken down into smaller units in order to make their way through complicated procedures. A history report on Abraham Lincoln may seem a completely overwhelming undertaking for an AD/HD child. But given a series of successive small steps, this youngster is better able to manage the project successfully.

If we understand this as an expectable need--filling different structural requirements--we can more easily do our part to help. Our expectations will be more appropriate and accountability can then be a meaningful part of the learning process of the AD/HD child, as it is for all children.

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Joyce B. Sousa is President of Sousa, Peacock, Sousa and Associates, Inc., an organization that provides counseling, training, education, and support for students, parents, and teachers on issues related to AD/HD. **For more information** phone: 217-352-4060.

Also see:

Robertson, Anne S. (1998). *ADD/ADHD: What does it mean for parents and families when their child is diagnosed with this condition?* Parent News, Of Interest [online]. Available: http://npin.org/pnews/1998/pnew598/pnew598d.html [1998, May].

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Of Interest

Speech Development in the Infant and Toddler

by Debbie Reese

As children grow from infancy to toddlerhood, early childhood, and so on, parents are often keenly aware of what their child "should" be doing at any given age. One of the milestones that frequently causes parents great anxiety is the development of speech. Those initial babblings that sound like words are celebrated, but later, some parents wonder if their child's ability to talk is delayed. This article outlines important aspects of speech development.

Before entering into a discussion about milestones of speech development, it is important to note the following:

- There is great variation in the onset of expressive language. Children generally understand far more (this is their "receptive speech") than they are able to articulate themselves ("expressive language").
- Girls seem to develop the ability to communicate earlier than boys.
- Language can develop smoothly and continuously, or in jumps and spurts.
- Because the development of speech varies, it is important not to compare your child's language development to other children's language development.
- If you suspect your child is having a delay in either receptive or expressive language, discuss your concerns with your family physician or pediatrician. He/she may evaluate the child, or refer you to professionals who specialize in speech and language evaluation.

Milestones in Speech Development

At 7 days of age, an infant can distinguish her mother's voice from another woman's voice.

At 2 weeks of age, an infant can distinguish her father's voice from another man's voice.

At 3 months, an infant can make vowel sounds.

At 6 to 8 months, the infant has added a few consonant sounds to the vowel sounds, and may say "dada" or "mama," but does not yet attach them to individuals.

At a year, the infant will attach "mama" or "dada" to the right person. The infant can respond to one-step commands ("Give it to me.")

At 15 months, the infant continues to string vowel and consonant sounds together (gibberish) but may imbed real words within the gibberish. The infant may be able to say as many as ten different words.

At 18 months, a toddler can say nouns (ball, cup), names of special people, and a few action words/phrases. The infant adds gestures to her speech, and may be able to follow a two-step command ("Go to the bedroom and get the toy.")

At 2 years of age, the child can combine words, forming simple sentences like "Daddy go."

At 3 years of age, the child can use sentences two- to four-words long, follow simple instructions, and often repeat words he/she overhears in conversations.

At 4 years of age, the child can understand most sentences, understands physical relationships (on, in, under), uses sentences that are four- or five-words long, can say his/her name, age, and sex, and uses pronouns. Strangers can understand the child's spoken language.

How Parents Can Help

Parents can help their children develop language skills by doing the following:

- Read books and sing songs to your child on a daily basis, beginning in infancy.
- Introduce new vocabulary in a meaningful context, e.g., name specific foods at dinnertime.
- Speak directly to your child, and give him/her time to respond.
- Avoid finishing sentences for the child.

Sources

Brazelton, T. Berry. (1992). *Touchpoints. Your child's emotional and behavioral development*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

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Parent News for June 1998

Of Interest

Children's Attitudes about Older Adults

by Debbie Reese

In today's society, children often have little opportunity to engage in meaningful interactions with older adults. There is a trend away from extended families to nuclear families (McCollum & Shreeve, 1994), and young couples just starting out often move away from their hometowns and relocate in places they can find employment and affordable housing. In some cases, families settle in new neighborhoods which attract young professionals, thereby minimizing opportunities for children to interact with grandparents or older adults (Kupetz, 1993).

Dellmann-Jenkins and Yang, researchers at Kent State University, recently conducted a study of the ways in which older adults are portrayed in children's picture books. The researchers chose to do an analysis of the 95 books (published between 1972 and 1995) that have received the prestigious Caldecott Medal or Caldecott Honor for outstanding illustrations in children's picture books. They found that:

- Only 12% (11 of 95) of the award-winners included a depiction of an older adult character.
- Books published between 1984 and 1995 had significantly more positive portrayals of older adult characters than those published between 1972 and 1983.
- In the more recent set of books, older adult characters are more often described as "right," "wonderful," "good," "caring," or "happy" than those in the older set of books.
- In the entire set of books analyzed, men were shown as "active" more often than women, and women were shown as "frightened" more often than men.

An interesting finding of the study is that older adult characters in the *award-winning* books are shown positively. In contrast, prior studies revealed that depictions of older adults in *popular* picture books (not award winners) show them as sick, dirty, poor, unfriendly, wrong, terrible, ugly, sad, bad, harmful, passive, irritable, lazy, cold-hearted, ignorant, or boring.

In a study of children's basal readers, Kutknecht (1986) found that the elderly do not appear as main characters, and statements made about them in the stories are more often negative than positive.

Studies on Children's Attitudes about Older Adults

In their 1994 article, McCollum and Shreeve discuss research on children's attitudes about older adults. Donorfio's (1991) study found that at each grade level, 60 to 70% of the children gave a negative response when asked to talk about how they feel about getting old. When they drew pictures of older adults, they drew them as helpful and friendly, but frail individuals in wheelchairs or using walkers. An earlier study by Jantz (1978) reported that children said the elderly are sad, depressed, and dying.

These findings are somewhat understandable, based on the contexts in which children get information about older adults. In addition to children's literature, children see depictions of older adults on television programs and advertisements. The media often depict older adults as rigid, meddlesome, unhealthy, and forgetful. Older adults are typically seen in advertisements for denture cremes or laxatives (Arluke & Levin, 1982).

Aday, Sims, McDuffie and Evans (1996) designed a study in which they brought children (4th graders) and senior citizens together for a series of activities over a 9-month period. Each child was paired with an older adult, and went through the following activities: (1) seniors visit the child's school; (2) child visits the senior's center; (3) exchange of small gift at Christmas; (4) painting to music produced from the 1930s to the present; (5) discussion of childhood games, activities, and values; (6) performance of songs and skits; (7) an informal time for sharing and deepening friendship and knowledge of each other; and (8) a farewell picnic in which participants talked about what the program had meant to them. Immediately following the period, a test was administered that indicated the children had significantly more positive attitudes toward the elderly than did a group of children who did not participate in the study. The children who participated were retested again after 5 years, and the researchers found that they had maintained their positive attitudes.

How Can We Use This Information?

Given the prevalence of negative depictions of older adults in the media and popular children's books, parents and teachers can take active steps to help their children gain more realistic understandings of older adults.

Self-reflection:

> Parents and teachers can reflect on their own attitudes about older adults. Developing an awareness of their own attitudes is an important first step in helping children develop more positive attitudes themselves. Kupetz (1993) suggests adults ask themselves the following questions to examine their own attitudes: (1) Have you experienced a lapse of memory and said "I must be getting old!"? (2) Do you fear that getting older will mean you will be less healthy and more dependent on others? (3) Do you expect your days as a senior citizen to be less active and unproductive? (4) When you think of older adults, do rocking chairs and nursing homes come to mind? (5) Do you think that older adults are "set in their ways" and resistant to change or development of new abilities and ideas?

In-school programs:

> Parents can encourage their children's teachers to explore ways of bringing older adults into the classroom as volunteers. These "intergenerational programs" (Aday, Sims, McDuffie, & Evans, 1996) allow children the opportunity to interact with older adults, and can result in improved perceptions of older adults. Parents can offer to provide transportation for older adults from their homes to schools.
>
> Teachers can explore ways in which relationships can be established between schools and senior citizen nursing homes. School children can visit nursing homes on a regular basis, reading to the residents, or organizing activities like bingo, lunches, socials, or entertainment programs (plays or "talent night") in which both children and residents participate (McCollum & Shreeve, 1994).

> Teachers can look for curricula that focus on healthy aging.

Using children's literature:

> Parents can encourage their children to select award-winning books at the school library or when purchasing books.
>
> When reading a book to a child that has a negative depiction of an older adult, the parent can pause to talk about that depiction, comparing it to older adults the child knows.
>
> Compare the similarities or differences in the ways that older adults are depicted with the child's own experiences with older adults, highlighting the diversity in ability and activity that exists among older adults.

With improved health care and medical treatments of disease, adults are experiencing longer life spans, and the United States is becoming a society of older people (Aday, Sims, McDuffie, & Evans, 1996). With their overall better health, they are remaining active. Older adults own and lead major companies, ride motorcycles, and engage in strenuous physical activities like peak climbing and marathon running (Kupetz, 1993). In addition, many older adults are avid users of the Internet, as both consumers and users of information (Imel, 1997). With effort, parents can help children see older adults as vital, healthy, contributing members of society. With these improved attitudes, it is hoped that children and people in general will not fear growing old. Through increased education and interaction, future generations can learn that growing old does not mean becoming worthless and waiting for death. Rather, growing old is simply a physical process that all living things begin on the day they are born (Garbin, 1998).

Sources

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Parent News for June 1998

Of Interest

Upcoming Satellite Conferences of Interest to Parents and Parent Educators

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Teaching Young Children Right from Wrong: Learning to Be Honest

Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Department of Human Development and Family Studies announces another *Principles of Parenting* satellite broadcast on Tuesday, June 30 from 11:45 am to 1:00 (Central Time). The topic of this broadcast is teaching children to be honest and features Drs. Catherine Solheim, Ellen Abell, Jacquelyn Mize, and Robbie Roberts. These panelists will discuss the development of young children (ages 3-6) and their honest and dishonest behaviors. The panelists will suggest how parents play a role in children's honest and dishonest behaviors and they will offer practical ways that parents can teach children right from wrong.

An opportunity will be provided during the broadcast to phone in questions. The number is 1-800-446-0390 or in the Auburn-Opelika area 844-0350.

The satellite coordinates are:

Satellite Band: C-Band
Satellite: GALAXY 6-TRANSPONDER 11
Downlink Frequency: 3920MHz-DOWN: (H) Horizontal

A limited number of taped copies of the broadcast will be available.

For more information, contact:

Byran Korth or Malinda Colwell
Telephone: 334-844-3798
Email: bkorth@humsci.auburn.edu

Parent Education Programs: A Planning and Evaluation Process

The National Network for Family Resiliency (NNFR) announces a satellite conference on Monday, July 6 from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time. The topic of this conference will be the demonstration and explanation of many planning and evaluation resources that will assist in the development of parenting programs. The purpose of the conference specifically is to provide: 1) simple and practical steps on how to plan and evaluate parenting education programs; and 2) a summary of resources on the Internet that can assist with the evaluation process, including the NNFR Parenting Evaluation Decision Framework Model.

Conference presenters are Dr. Karen DeBord, State Specialist in Child Development at North Carolina State University and the Chair of the Parenting Special Interest Group with the NNFR; and Dr. Wendy Stivers, Extension Specialist, 4-H/Youth at the University of Kentucky and the Chair of the Evaluation Workgroup with the NNFR.

For more information, contact:

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Internet: http://www.nnfr.org/nnfr/

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Parent News for June 1998

Of Interest

Study Aims to Help Answer "What Is Normal Sexual Behavior in Young Children?"

One of teachers' and parents' fears is that when they see a child display sexual behavior that the child may have been sexually molested. In an effort to better understand what should be considered "normal" sexual behavior and to help alleviate some of these fears, researchers from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota asked 1,142 mothers to rate the sexual behavior in their 2- to 12-year-old children who had been screened so that any child who may have been sexually abused was excluded from the study.

According to the report in the April 1998 issue of *Pediatrics,* children were found to exhibit numerous sexual behaviors. The behaviors most frequently observed included self-stimulating behaviors (such as touching one's genitals), exhibitionism (repeated undressing in front of others), and behaviors related to personal boundaries (standing too close to others or rubbing up against someone).

One interesting finding was that sexual behavior showed an inverse relationship with age, with the overall frequency peaking at age 5 for both boys and girls. This means that after age 5 the frequency of these behaviors decreased with age. Based on this finding, it would appear that such sexual behaviors in preschool-age children are within normal developmental limits. In fact, the researchers note that "simply because a 5-year-old boy touches his genitals occasionally, it does not mean he has been sexually abused. Rather, it is a behavior that is seen in almost two-thirds of boys that age."

Researchers hope the results of this study will help parents and pediatricians better understand the relative normalcy of a large number of sexual behaviors in children. However, they do not want to underestimate the importance of the relationship that has been found to exist in past research between sexual behavior in children and sexual abuse. They point out that when a behavior or group of behaviors is excessive or unusual or raises concern, parents should consult with a pediatrician to address the behaviors.

Source

Friedrich, William; Fisher, Jennifer; Broughton, Daniel; Houston, Margaret; & Shafran, Constance. (1998). Normative sexual behavior in children [Online]. Available: http://www.pediatrics.org/cgi/reprint/101/4/e9.pdf [1998, April 7].

Prepared for *Parent News* by Dawn Ramsburg.

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Parent News for June 1998

Of Interest

Children and Sports: Don't Forget to Practice Sportsmanship!

by Dawn Ramsburg

As the weather grows warmer, memories of spending hours in my backyard with my parents and my sisters come flooding back. The game of choice for us was softball, although there were many games of kick soccer, croquet, badminton, tag, hopscotch, and catch as well. From the time we finished cleaning up after dinner until it was too dark to see the ball anymore, we took turns hitting, pitching, and fielding the softball. And over the course of several years, starting when I was 8 years old, our dad took turns coaching each of us on a local park district team until my youngest sister finished playing.

Through those hours of playing in the backyard, my sisters and I learned a variety of skills—how to throw a ball, how to hit, and how to catch. By having our dad as a coach, we also learned another important part of the game—how to be a good sport. Sitting around the kitchen table after a game, we learned about other aspects of the game such as fairness as he talked about making a lineup that included everyone, teamwork, respect for others regardless of their ability, and how important it was to have fun. My dad had a rule as a coach that everyone got to play in every game, regardless of skill level. This rule helped us learn that having an opportunity to play was more important than winning.

While it did take a few summers to eventually learn this lesson, it was sometimes evident that some of the adults in the stands and parents of teammates had never learned this lesson. Each summer my dad would receive at least one phone call from a parent questioning why his or her daughter did not get to start or was taken out at the end of the game. This parent would argue that the game was lost because his or her child was not in the game at a critical moment when perhaps a younger, less experienced player was on the field or up to bat. My dad would calmly and carefully explain his coaching philosophy to the parent—that this was a recreational league, a chance for everyone to learn and grow, it was a team game, and, to him, the most important outcome was for everyone to have fun and he did not think that would happen if some players had to sit on the bench the whole season. Sometimes, after those phone calls, the parents would understand what he was saying and then they would appear more supportive of the whole team at games. Sometimes, however, the player would stop coming to practices and games.

As I think back over those years, and even to a similar phone call I received when I coached a couple of years ago, I cannot help but remember all of the key plays that were made by those players regarded as "not as good." More vividly, I remember the screams of joy and the feelings of confidence that were bursting from those players in these moments and the pride that was beaming from their parents' faces. It is these moments that reinforce to me how important it is not to forget to teach good sportsmanship when teaching the other basic skills of a game. This can sometimes be difficult to remember, however, when we see professional athletes fighting with each other, fans booing players at a stadium, and parents at little league games criticizing other players.

Benefits of Youth Sports Participation

It has been estimated that 22 million children and youth, ages 6 to 18, are involved in organized sports outside of school (Poinsett, 1996). Research indicates that participation in sports can promote healthy development.

According to the American Sport Education Program (1994), sports participation:

- Builds an appreciation of personal health and fitness;
- Develops a positive self-image;
- Teaches how to work as part of a team;
- Develops social skills with other children and adults (such as taking turns and sharing playing time);
- Teaches both how to manage success and disappointment; and,
- Teaches how to respect others.

In order to better understand these benefits, much of the research on youth sports has examined how sports enhance aspects of children's social development. Specifically, studies have examined how sports contribute to the development of **social competence**—the ability to get along with and be accepted by peers, family members, teachers, and coaches; and, **self-esteem**—the extent to which an individual believes him/herself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy (Ewing, 1997).

According to the findings, children learn to assess their social competence in sports through the feedback received from parents and coaches (Ewing, 1997). Self-esteem, on the other hand, is developed through both evaluation of one's own abilities as well as evaluation of the responses received from others. Children actively observe parents' and coaches' responses to their performances by looking for signs (often nonverbal) of approval or disapproval of their behavior. Lack of feedback and criticism is often interpreted as a negative response to the behavior.

Because children often use social comparison as a way of determining their ability in sport, participation in youth sports activities provides children with many opportunities to determine their ability compared with others on their team (Ewing, 1997). Unfortunately, given the influence of other factors such as maturation and previous knowledge of a sport on one's ability to perform a sport skill, children often reach incorrect conclusions about their abilities. Thus, the role of parents and coaches is significant in helping children interpret their strengths and weaknesses in a sport.

What is Sportsmanship?

Most younger children do not understand fully what is meant by sportsmanship. When one physical education teacher asks his class to explain sportsmanship, he hears such replies as: "Don't cheat," "Don't get mad or cry when you lose," or "Don't yell at your teammates when they make a mistake" (Sitz, 1997). Children often have a hard time understanding the concepts of competition, winning, and losing. This is understandable when you consider that children see all of the attention and rewards thrown toward winners while losers do not receive such focus. The message that kids are learning, then, is that people are valued only if they are a winner (Sitz, 1997).

On the other hand, most adults can explain sportsmanship by discussing the respect for the game, the players, the rules, and the officials (Sitz, 1997). Adults can understand that it is O.K. to lose and that what is important is to do your best and strive to improve your own abilities. Despite adults' ability to understand the complexities of sportsmanship, some fail to display good sportsmanship for a variety of reasons. Some parents and adults get wrapped up in the competition because they are living vicariously through their children (Burnett, 1996). Others might have unrealistic expectations about their child, thinking she or he might be the next superstar. To ensure that children gain the benefits of sports participation, however, it is important for parents and coaches to evaluate and monitor their own attitudes and behaviors so that good sportsmanship is learned.

Ways to Promote Sportsmanship

Coaches and parents can promote good sportsmanship by:

- Maintaining a "Fun is Number 1" attitude. If everyone is having fun, it'll make learning all aspects of the game more enjoyable and rewarding (Burnett, 1996).
- Designing sport activities which facilitate cooperation rather than just competition so that youth learn about fair play (Ewing, 1997).
- Teaching children the rules of the game and making sure that everyone (players, parents, fans) abides by those rules during competition (Ewing, 1997).
- Encouraging and supporting all players on a team (American Sport Education Program, 1994).
- Controlling emotions in frustrating situations (American Sport Education Program, 1994).
- Treating officials, coaches, players, teammates, and opponents with respect and avoiding ridicule and sarcasm (Burnett, 1996).
- Using moments from the game to teach about being a good sport ("I know it seemed like you got the runner at first out, but I was really proud of the way you didn't argue with the umpire.") (American Sport Education Program, 1994).
- Making sure there are consequences when poor sportsmanship is displayed (Sitz, 1998).
- Providing examples of good sportsmanship such as shaking hands with the opponent at the end of the game (Ewing, 1997).

Participation in youth sports provides numerous opportunities for healthy development physically, socially, and morally. The key to children gaining these benefits comes from coaches, parents, and others adults not only teaching children how to play the sports, but also supporting and demonstrating how to be a good sport. This can be done not only during the game, but also when playing softball in the backyard.

Additional Resources

10-item Checklist for Developing Good Sportsmanship by Dr. Darrell J. Burnett
http://www.youth-sports.com/topics/feb98-08.html

Ohio State University Human Development and Family Life Team. (1997). Competition: The good, the bad, the ugly. *Human Development and Family Life Bulletin, 3*(1) [online]. Available: http://www.hec.ohio-state.edu/famlife/bulletin/volume.3/bull25xx.htm [1998, May 5].

Teaching Youngsters How to Be Good Sports
http://www.youth-sports.com/related.html

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Of Interest

Children's Books

The ERIC system offers documents called "Information Guides" on a broad range of topics related to education. Of relevance to children's literature is an ERIC Info Guide called "Children's Literature" written by Sue A. Clary in 1994 (updated on November 15, 1995, by Twana Weiler). This online info guide contains links to many Web sites about children's literature. It is available online at:

http://ericir.syr.edu/cgi-bin/markup_infoguides/Alphabetical_List_of_InfoGuides/Children's_Lit-11.95

Below are children's books on the following topics: children's sexual development, fathers, and older adults.

Children's Sexual Development

Flight of the Stork: What Children Think (and When) about Sex and Family Building, by Anne C. Bernstein (Published in 1994 by Perspectives Press). All ages.

How You Were Born, by Joanna Cole, with photographs by Margaret Miller (Published in 1994 by Mulberry Books). Ages: 4-8.

It's Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex, and Sexual Health, by Robie H. Harris, illustrated by Michael Emberley (Published in 1996 by Candlewick Press). All ages.

Mommy Laid an Egg! or Where Do Babies Come From!, by Babette Cole (Published in 1996 by Chronicle Books). Ages: 4-8.

Fathers

Ducklings and Pollywogs, by Anne F. Rockwell, illustrated by Lizzy Rockwell (Published in 1994 by Simon & Schuster). Ages: 4-8.

The Emperor and the Kite, by Jane Yolen, illustrated by Ed Young (Published in 1988 by Putnam). Ages: 4-8.

In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall: African Americans Celebrating Fathers, edited by Javaka Steptoe (Published in 1997 by Lee & Low). Ages: 9-12.

My Father's Hands, by Joanne Ryder, illustrated by Mark Graham (Published in 1994 by William Morrow & Co.). Ages: 4-8.

Older Adults

A Chair for My Mother, written and illustrated by Vera B. Williams (Published in 1987 by Greenwillow). Ages: 4-8.

Grandfather's Journey, written and illustrated by Allen Say (Published in 1993 by Houghton Mifflin). Ages: 4-8.

The Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher, written and illustrated by Molly Bang (Published in 1996 by Aladdin). Ages: 4-8.

John Henry, by Brad Kissler, illustrated by Julius Lester & Jerry Pinkney (Published in 1994 by Dial Books). Ages: 4-8.

Peppe, the Lamplighter, by Elise Bartone, illustrated by Ted Lewis (Published in 1993 by Lothrop, Lee and Shepard). Ages: 5-10.

Song and Dance Man, by Karen Ackerman, illustrated by Stephen Gammell (Published in 1989 by Random). Ages: 4-8.

The Relatives Came, by Cynthia Rylant, illustrated by Stephen Gammell (Published in 1985 by Simon and Schuster). Ages: 4-8.

The Talking Eggs, by Robert D. San Souci, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney (Published in 1989 by E.P. Dutton). Ages: 4-8.

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

Nord, Christine Winquist. (1998). *Students Do Better when Their Fathers Are Involved at School.*

Policy makers and educators agree that family involvement in children's education is closely linked to children's school success. An important question, however, is "does fathers' involvement matter, as well?" This issue brief looks at the link between fathers' involvement in their children's schools and kindergartners' through 12th graders' school performance, using data from the National Household Education Survey (NHES) for 1996. Findings indicated that in two-parent households, children are more likely to do well academically, to participate in extracurricular activities, and to enjoy school, and are less likely to have ever repeated a grade or to have been suspended or expelled, if their fathers have high as opposed to low involvement in their schools. This was also true in father-only households, allowing that children living in single-parent households are, on average, less successful in school and experience more behavior problems than children living in two-parent households. The issue brief concludes by noting that fathers can be a positive force in their children's education, and that in two-parent households, fathers' involvement has a distinct and independent influence on children's achievement over and above that of mothers' involvement. PS026471

National Center for Education Statistics Issue Brief
For this Issue Brief and other NCES publications:
Telephone: 800-424-1616
Internet: http://nces.ed.gov/

Nord, Christine Winquist. (1998). *How Involved Are Fathers in Their Children's Schools?*

Until recently fathers were the hidden parents in research on children's well-being. Research stimulated by the new interest in fathers suggests that fathers' involvement in their children's schools does make a difference in their children's education. This issue brief looks at the extent to which fathers are involved in their kindergartners' through 12th graders' schools, using data from the 1996 National Household Education Survey (NHES). Findings noted include the following: (1) fathers in two-parent families are less likely than mothers in two-parent families to be highly involved in their children's schools; (2) fathers and mothers who head single-parent families are virtually identical in their level of involvement, and it is quite similar to that of mothers in two-parent families; (3) fathers in two-parent families are more likely to attend school or class events or general school meetings than they are to attend parent-teacher conferences or to volunteer at their children's schools. The issue brief concludes by noting that the observed patterns of fathers' involvement are consistent with existing research and with the notion of a division of labor in two-parent families. The low participation of fathers in two-parent families offers schools an opportunity to increase overall parental involvement by targeting fathers. PS026470

National Center for Education Statistics Issue Brief
For this Issue Brief and other NCES publications:
Telephone: 800-424-1616
Internet: http://nces.ed.gov/

Supporting Children with Challenging Behaviors: Relationships Are Key. Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community. *(1997)*

Increasingly, teachers are expressing concern about problem behaviors many children display in their classrooms. This technical guide offers Head Start staff a process for reflecting on their own practice, assessing difficult situations, and designing interventions for problem behaviors through joint problem solving. The guide is written for Head Start teaching teams and their immediate supervisors; it will also be useful to family service workers, home visitors, managers, and other Head Start staff, as well as consultants. The guide contains the following sections: (1) "Module 1: Laying the Groundwork" helps participants identify ways in which their own perceptions and experiences influence how they interact with children with challenging behaviors; (2) "Module 2: Practically Speaking" helps participants develop a system for collecting data and then using it to develop strategies that capitalize on children's strengths and needs; (3) "Module 3: Building a Supportive Environment" helps participants identify when and how to seek appropriate supports within the program and within the community in an effort to fully integrate children with challenging behaviors into their programs; (4) "Continuing Professional Development" offers strategies that supervisors can use to help staff apply new skills and extend their learning; and (5) "Resources" lists print and audiovisual materials and other resources that staff can use to learn more about the key issues presented in the guide. In order to accommodate the needs of different Head Start grantees, each module offers two different delivery strategies: workshop and coaching. PS026420

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Governor Ray Romer's Task Force on Parent Education and Involvement. *(1997)*

This report contains the recommendations of Colorado Governor Romer's Task Force on Parent Education and Involvement, a task force comprised of parents, advocates, and professionals charged with discussing the importance of parenting, the state's role in supporting parents, and the best lessons about the outcomes of parent education, support, and involvement. The report begins with an outline of factors contributing to the current emphasis on parenting. The bulk of the report is comprised of a discussion of the task force's recommendations: (1) make parent education, support, and involvement programs a central theme in counties' welfare reform plans; (2) create a new statewide fund for prevention efforts that include parent education, support, and involvement; (3) hold parent education, support, and involvement programs accountable for improved parent and child outcomes by evaluating their impact; (4) ensure that parent education, support, and involvement are central elements in child care programs, schools, churches, youth organizations, health care agencies, and other local, state, and national organizations; (5) establish a permanent state-level body within the executive or legislative branch of state government to coordinate and govern policies and funding of parent education, support, and involvement programs; and (6) launch a media campaign that carries the message that parenting is the most important job a person can have and that community well-being depends on parents doing the best job possible. A set of guiding principles for policy makers is delineated. The report concludes with a list of task force and resource group members. PS026089

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136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203
Telephone: 303-866-2471
(free of charge)

Ward, Christopher R.; And Others. (1993). *Older Adults in Child Care: A Job-Training Model.*

Recognizing the increasing demand for older adults to work as child care employees, this manual presents the Generations Together model for training older adults at the community college level to work in child care settings. The manual describes the steps necessary to implement a community-college-based, older-adult child care employment training program, presents issues and problems encountered during implementation along with solutions, and provides specific examples to guide future programs. Part 1 of the manual introduces the program and describes how to use the manual. Part 2 provides an overview of the program, which is usually taught over 11 weeks, with 79 class hours and 36 practicum hours. The steps described for the model sequence are leadership team formation, recruitment, screening, training, placement, follow-up, and evaluation. Part 3 details project preparation and planning, including how to form the leadership team, plan the implementation strategy, find funding, and staff the program. Part 4 discusses project implementation, including recruiting, screening, training, and placing trainees; and following up with the trainees. Parts 5 and 6 outline the importance of program evaluation, and documentation and program maintenance through relocation. Print and organization resources are listed. Appendices contain the forms necessary to implement the program, including a budget worksheet, program fact sheet, recruitment fliers, and a sample placement letter. (Contains 12 references.) PS025589

Generations Together Publications
University of Pittsburgh
121 University Place, Suite 300
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Telephone: 412-648-2209 (Publication No. 541, $10)

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

Parent News for June 1998

Resources for Parents

Book Summaries and Reviews

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1. Singer, Dorothy G.; Revenson, Tracy A. (1997). ***A Piaget Primer: How a Child Thinks.*** **(Revised Edition). International Universities Press, Inc., 59 Boston Post Rd., Madison, CT 06443-1524; Telephone: 203-245-4000 ($27.95).**

While other developmental theories, on a smaller scale, share center stage with Piagetian theory, Jean Piaget will likely be remembered as one of the world's leading psychologists of the twentieth century. This book, with a first version published nearly 20 years ago, attempts to make Piaget's concepts more "user friendly" for those individuals who interact with young children, using examples from children's literature. This revised version reflects the more complex and technology-laden world today's children live in, claiming that emerging technologies offer an opportunity and challenge to explore how Piaget's insights will be sustained or modified as children confront and devise strategies for using these new sources of input. The book's chapters are: (1) "Jean Piaget and His Theory"; (2) "The Stages of a Child's Development"; (3) "How Intelligence Develops"; (4) "Playing and Imitating"; (5) "How Language Develops"; (6) "Discovering Space, Time, and Numbers"; (7) "Learning about Right and Wrong"; and (8) "Beyond Piaget: Using His Theory for Teaching, Learning, and Parenting." The book includes a glossary and index. (Contains approximately 112 references.) PS026386

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2. ***Caring for You and Your Baby: From Pregnancy through the First Year of Life.*** **(1997). Fairview Press, 2450 Riverside Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55434; Telephone: 800-544-8207; Internet: http://www.Press.Fairview.org (U.S., $12.95; Canada, $17.95).**

Prepared by the Maternal and Newborn Services staff at a health care system affiliated with the University of Minnesota, this book is designed as several resources in one, encompassing pregnancy, childbirth, infant care, child development, baby keepsakes, medical records, and journal-keeping. The book provides authoritative, up-to-date information in easily understood language and pictures. Typical questions of new parents are highlighted to the side of the text. Chapters include: (1) "You're Pregnant"; (2) "The First Three Months"; (3) "The Second Three Months"; (4) "The Final Three Months"; (5) "Your Baby Arrives"; (6) "Your Newborn"; (7) "Feeding Your Baby"; and (8) "Baby's First Fifteen Months." Special features in the guide include over 80 illustrations, advice for partners, lists of resources, numerous charts and graphs, recordkeeping and journal pages, and an index. PS026360

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3. Taylor, Barbara Lynn. (1996). ***The Single Parent Family: A Challenge for Parents. Successful Parenting. Facilitator's Guide.*** **(Part Seven). Richards and Taylor Productions, P.O. Box 11851, Winston-Salem, NC 27116; Telephone: 800-544-2219; Fax: 910-712-0030 (Video, $39.95).**

Intended for parent educators, this facilitator's guide outlines a workshop for single parents to help them meet the challenges of raising children alone. The guide first presents frameworks for a 1- or 2-hour workshop and for an 8-session workshop. The remainder of the guide corresponds to a 28-minute companion video, presenting questions for discussion prior to and after viewing the video, and discussion points geared to specific parts of the video. Topics covered are: (1) ways single families happen; (2) problems found in each single-family situation; (3) suggestions for parents who are separated or divorced; (4) some serious problems for divorced or separated parents; (5) problems divorced people have that go beyond their role as parents; (6) ideas that should help noncustodial parents; (7) problems common to most single parents, regardless of their circumstances; (8) parenting practices all parents should keep in mind; (9) dating; (10) remarriage; (11) advantages of being a single parent; (12) what makes a single parent home hard for the children; (13) what kids miss by not living with the other parent, too; (14) how single parent children sometimes feel; (15) research comparing children from single-parent families to those from two-parent families; and (16) advice from the single parents appearing in the video. A personal plan worksheet and workshop handouts are appended. ED402041 PS024806

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4. Taylor, Barbara Lynn. (1995). *School Success Takes Teamwork: Taming the Homework Monster. Successful Parenting. Facilitator's Guide.* (Part Five). Richards and Taylor Productions, P.O. Box 11851, Winston-Salem, NC 27116; Telephone: 800-544-2219; Fax: 910-712-0030 (Video, $39.95).

Intended for parent educators, this facilitator's guide outlines a parent workshop on helping children with homework. The guide first presents a framework for both a 1-hour and a 2-hour workshop, based on a companion video. The remainder of the guide corresponds to the video, presenting suggestions for discussion prior to and after viewing the video, and questions geared to specific sections of the video. The 19-minute video presents suggestions for parents, divided by grade level (K-1, 2-5, middle school, and high school), on helping their children complete homework assignments and major projects. Areas covered include the study environment, reading and math, communicating with a child's teachers, and adolescent development. ED402039 PS024804

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5. Penley, Janet P.; Stephens, Diane W. (1995). *The M.O.M.S. Handbook: Understanding Your Personality Type in Mothering.* Available from: Penley and Associates, Inc., 604 Maple Ave., Wilmette, IL 60091 ($12, plus $2.50 shipping; discount on 5 or more copies).

This handbook is designed to enable mothers to identify their personality type according to the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and to relate their personality type to their strengths, struggles, and needs as mothers. Part 1 introduces the seven Mothers of Many Styles (MOMS) principles providing the basis for this approach, and the concept of personality type. Part 2, "The Basics of Personality Type," describes the four MBTI personality dimensions and presents the approximate frequency of the eight preferences (two preferences for each of four dimensions) in the United States population. Part 3, "Your Type Preferences and Mothering Style," relates personality type preferences dealing with energy, information, decision-making, and lifestyle to mothering style. For each preference (extroverted, introverted, sensing, intuitive, thinking, feeling, judging, perceiving), the handbook describes the kinds of activities the mother may gravitate toward, the kinds of struggles with child rearing she may encounter, and tips for child rearing. Part 4, "Mothering Profiles of the 16 Types," presents research findings on the 16 personality types (based on the possible combination of 4 preferences, 1 each from each of 4 dimensions) based on interviews with mothers. Strengths, struggles, and tips for mothers exhibiting each personality profile are given. Part 5, "Making Practical Use of Type," discusses using information on one's personality type to better understand children and to reduce work-family conflicts. Recommended additional resources complete the handbook. ED400991 PS024691

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Parent News for June 1998

Resources for Parents

Organizations

Alive Alone, Inc.

Founded in 1988, this national self-help network is for parents who have lost an only child or all of their children. It provides education and publications to promote communication and healing and to assist in resolving grief.

Contact:

Alive Alone
c/o Kay Bevington
11115 Dull Robinson Rd.
Van Wert, OH 45891

The Compassionate Friends

The Compassionate Friends is a national organization with chapters across the country. Founded in 1969, the organization offers support, friendship, and understanding to parents and siblings grieving the death of a child. Compassionate Friends publishes a newsletter for adults at $20/year, and another for siblings at $10/year.

Contact:

The Compassionate Friends
P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
Telephone: 630-990-0010
Fax: 630-990-0246

MELD

MELD is committed to strengthening families by offering the following services to organizations that work with families: training and workshop opportunities, materials and publications for parents and professionals, and nine nationally recognized parenting programs.

Contact:

MELD
123 N. Third St., Suite 507
Minneapolis, MN 55401

National Youth Leadership Council

The National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC) was founded in 1983 as a non-profit organization whose mission is to engage young people in their communities and schools through innovative programs in learning, service, leadership, and public policy. NYLC strategies include: (1) developing innovative model programs in schools across America; (2) creating curricula and training programs for educators and youth; (3) advocating educational reform and progressive youth policy; (4) conducting on-going research in youth issues; and (5) maintaining extensive networks in support of these measures. The NYLC produces and offers state-of-the-art service-learning curriculum materials and training resources for educators, policy makers, and advocates of service-learning.

Contact:

National Youth Leadership Council
1910 West County Rd. B
St. Paul, MN 55113
Telephone: 612-631-3672
Fax: 612-631-2955
Email: NYLCUSA@AOL.COM
Internet: http://www.nylc.org/NYLC.index.html

Parents Involved Network

Founded in 1984, the Parents Involved Network is a parent-run, self-help/advocacy, information and referral service for families of children/adolescents who have emotional or behavioral disorders. The organization provides support, telephone information and referral, and linkage with other parents and parent organizations.

Contact:

Parents Involved Network
1211 Chestnut St., 11th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Telephone: 215-751-1800 or 800-688-4226
Fax: 215-636-6300

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Resources for Parents

Newsletters/Magazines

San Diego Parent

This magazine has a number of informative articles for parents, particularly those parents in the San Diego area. A recent edition includes information on how to choose a family friendly cruise, summer camps for children, and sports for girls. Regular features are on a variety of topics, including health, family activities, family entertainment, and parenting classes. ($14 per year)

For more information:

San Diego Parent Magazine
3160 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 313
San Diego, CA 92108
Telephone: 619-624-2770
Email: sdparent@family.com

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Parent News for June 1998

Resources for Parents

NETWorking: Web Sites to Visit

Name: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)

Description: The mission of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) is to promote the growth and development of quality child care resource and referral services and to exercise leadership in building a diverse, high quality child care system with parental choice and equal access for all families. Child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies across the country: (1) support families in the most important roles of nurturing their children and balancing the demands of family and work; (2) compile, analyze, and share information with parents, child care providers, and communities; (3) support individuals and programs that care for children; and (4) build connections in communities and states to create appropriate policies on family and children's issues and to generate additional resources for child care. The Web site offers a variety of resources for parents, providers, programs, and child advocates.

Address: http://childcarerr.org/

Name: ParentPartners

Description: ParentPartners offers a network of resources, activities, information, and services for parents which is customized to their child's development needs. The site focuses on children from birth to 5 years of age.

Address: http://www.parentpartners.com/

Name: Women's Bureau

Sponsor: U.S. Department of Labor

Description: The Women's Bureau is the only unit at the Federal government level exclusively concerned with serving and promoting the interests of working women. The Web site offers a variety of information, resources, and statistics on such issues as child care, elder care, family leave, fair employment practices, and women's rights in the workplace.

Address: http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/

Name: National Child Care Information Center

Sponsor: Child Care Bureau

Description: The National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) has been established to complement, enhance, and promote child care linkages and to serve as a mechanism for supporting quality, comprehensive services for children and families. The site offers: (1) numerous publications related to child care: (2) organizational and Internet resources; (3) information on health and safety in child care, welfare reform, and brain development research; (4) state profiles; (5) resources for states, territories, and tribes; and (6) child care technical assistance resources.

Address: http://www.nccic.org/

Name: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education

Description: The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system designed to provide users with ready access to an extensive body of education-related literature. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (ERIC/EECE) is one of 16 clearinghouses in the ERIC system, which is part of the National Library of Education, funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education. ERIC clearinghouses identify and select documents and journal articles, and then prepare entries describing the documents and articles to be incorporated into the ERIC database, the world's most frequently used collection of information on education. Clearinghouses also publish digests, monographs, and other publications; answer questions; disseminate information on the Internet; and represent ERIC at conferences and workshops. ERIC/EECE contributes to the database in the areas of child development, the education and care of children from birth through early adolescence, the teaching of young children, and parenting and family life

Address: http://ericeece.org/

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Parent News for June 1998

Resources for Parents

Conference Calendar

Note: Only new conferences not previously listed in Parent News are included in this issue. For a full listing of conferences, workshops, and other parenting-related events, go to the PARENTING Calendar section of NPIN.

Conference: 15th Annual Conference on Infancy and Childhood: Current Issues in Theory, Research, and Application

Date: June 14-19, 1998

Place: Utah State University, Logan, Utah

Description: This is the 15th Annual Conference on Infancy and Childhood. Current issues in theory, research, and application will be discussed.

Contact:

Frank Ascione
Utah State University
Telephone: 435-797-1464
Fax: 435-797-1148
Email: FrankA@FS1.ED.USU.EDU

Conference: Invest in Families: Intergenerational Relationships

Sponsor: National Conference of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

Date: June 27-30, 1998

Place: Atlanta Hilton and Towers, Atlanta, Georgia

Description: The theme of the 1998 Annual Meeting of the National Conference of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences is "Invest in Families: Intergenerational Relationships." At the conference, professionals in the family and consumer sciences will gain insight into how they can address the complexities of society's most pressing concerns facing families at the local, state, national, and international levels. Participants will focus on professional and leadership development through a selection of panels, roundtables, lectures, and workshops.

Contact:

Monique Cooper
Telephone: 800-424-8080
Fax: 703-706-4663
Email: mcooper@aacfs.org
Internet: http://www.aafcs.org/pages/meetings/aafcs_d2.html

Conference: Miles to Go, Promises to Keep in the New Millennium

Sponsor: National Black Child Development Institute

Date: October 10-13, 1998

Place: Hyatt Regency Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

Description: The 1998 annual conference of the National Black Child Development Institute is called "Miles to Go, Promises to Keep in the New Millennium."

Contact:

NBCDI--1998 Annual Conference
1023 15th St. NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: 202-387-1281 or 800-556-2234
Email: moreinfo@nbcdi.org
Internet: http://www.nbcdi.org/

Conference: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) National Conference

Sponsor: NAEYC

Date: November 18-21, 1998

Place: Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Description: This is the 1998 Annual Conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Contact:

NAEYC
1509 16th St. NW

Washington, DC 20036-1426
Telephone: 800-424-2460 or 202-232-8777
Fax: 202-328-1846
Email: pubaff@naeyc.org
Internet: http://www.naeyc.org/conferences/annual_conference.htm

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Conference: 13th National Training Institute

Sponsor: ZERO TO THREE

Date: December 3-5, 1998

Place: Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, DC

Description: This conference brings together practitioners from all disciplines for a concentrated approach to issues in the infant/family field. This year's conference includes 3 plenaries, 10 symposia, presentations, forums, and exhibits. It is intended for anyone who works with infants, toddlers, and their families.

Contact:

Registration Office
Telephone: 703-486-0675
Internet: http://www.zerotothree.org

Conference: 15th Annual Parent Training Conference

Sponsor: National Head Start Association

Date: December 10-15, 1998

Place: Washington, DC

Description: This is the 15th Annual Parent Training Conference sponsored by the National Head Start Association.

Contact:

National Head Start Association
1651 Prince St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone: 703-739-0875
Fax: 703-739-0878
Internet: http://www.nhsa.org/

NPIN
National Parent Information Network

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- What's New on NPIN
- July's Feature:
  Talking to Children about Sexuality and AIDS
  by Lefkowitz and Au
- Community Spotlight:
  Program Evaluation: Important But Not Easy
- Of Interest:
  - *Adolescent Behavior: Resources Available for Additional Support* by Anne Robertson
  - *New Study of Children's Perceptions of Race and Class on Television* by Debbie Reese
  - *No-Recess Policies Being Implemented in U.S. School Districts* by Dawn Ramsburg
  - *New IDEA Bill Clarifies Parental Role in School Meetings for Special Education Students*
  - *1997 National Education Goals Report: Are We Meeting Goal One?*
  - *The New ReadyWeb is Now Ready!* by Bernard Cesarone
  - *Children's Books*
- Resources for Parents:
  - Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets
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Parent News Editorial Information

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PS 027211

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NPIN Coordinator and *Parent News* Editor: Anne Robertson
Production Editor: Emily S. Van Hyning

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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster

Parent News for July 1998

What's New on NPIN

For a listing and description of items that are new on NPIN over the last three months, see the What's New on NPIN section on the NPIN Home Page.

What's New: Resources added to NPIN during June 1998

Several new items have been added to several topical areas in the Resources for Parents / Full Text of Parenting-Related Materials section.

In the Child Care (All Ages) section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *A Guide to Choosing an After-School Program*
  This Parent Guide from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education discusses the process of choosing an after-school program. Types of programs are discussed, as well as the qualities of a good one, along with what to look for in an after-school program.

In the Early Childhood: Learning section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Learning through Water Play*
  This publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children includes suggestions for parents and caregivers for safe, fun and educational water play. Ideas include safety precautions, games, and materials that can be used during play.
- *The Value of School Recess and Outdoor Play*
  This publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children discusses the benefits of school recess. This publication also includes the positive effects that unstructured physical play has on a child's learning ability as well as the potential drawbacks of eliminating recess in elementary schools.
- *Celebrating Transitions in the Early Years*
  This publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children includes suggestions for parents and schools on how to make celebrating the transition from preschool through "graduation" meaningful, fun, and encouraging for the children involved. The publication includes suggestions on ways that this transition can be celebrated.
- *Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practices*
  This publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children includes suggestions for teachers on how to move from a philosophy of early childhood education to applying it in the classroom.
- *"Can you see what I see?" Cultivating Self-Expression through Art*
  This publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children discusses the importance and the benefits of developing a child's involvement in art. Some "useful tips to inspire the Picasso in your child" are included.

In the Older Children, Pre-Teens, and Early Adolescents section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Preparing Middle School Students for a Career*
  This Parent Guide from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education provides information on how middle schools, as well as parents, can help focus a student's attention toward career awareness. The publication also discusses ways that middle schools can promote the development and education of adolescents.
- *Cómo Preparar a Los Estudiantes de Intermedia Para Una Carrera*
  This Parent Guide from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education provides information on how middle schools, as well as parents, can help focus a student's attention toward career awareness. The publication also discusses ways that middle schools can promote the development and education of adolescents.
- *New Information on Youth Who Drop Out: Why They Leave and What Happens to Them*
  This Parent Guide from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education discusses the reasons why students drop out, the consequences of these decisions, and what parents and schools can do to help students stay in school or get an alternative education, and also meet the responsibilities that caused them to decide to drop out initially.

In the Parents and Schools as Partners section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Enjoying Stress-Free Summer Activities*
  This publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children includes ideas for summer activities, especially for those families who are working to balance the demands of adult work schedules and providing activities for their children.
- *The Value of School Recess and Outdoor Play*
  This publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children discusses the benefits of school recess. The publication also includes the positive effects that unstructured physical play has on a child's learning ability and the potential drawbacks of eliminating recess in elementary schools.

In the Teens (140-20) section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *New Information on Youth Who Drop Out: Why They Leave and What Happens to Them*
  This Parent Guide from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education discusses the reasons why students drop out, the consequences of these decisions, and what parents and schools can do to help students stay in school or get an alternative education, and also meet the responsibilities that caused them to decide to drop out initially.

Reviews or summaries of the following parenting-related books were added to the Parenting Resources: Books section of NPIN:

- *A Piaget Primer: How a Child Thinks (Revised Edition),* by Dorothy G. Singer and Tracy A. Revenson.
- *Caring for You and Your Baby: From Pregnancy through the First Year of Life,* from Fairview Health Services, University of Minnesota.

- *The Single Parent Family: A Challenge for Parents. Successful Parenting. Facilitator's Guide (Part Seven),* by Barbara Lynn Taylor.
- *School Success Takes Teamwork: Taming the Homework Monster. Successful Parenting. Facilitator's Guide (Part Five),* by Barbara Lynn Taylor.
- *The M.O.M.S. Handbook: Understanding Your Personality Type in Mothering,* by Janet P. Penley and Diane W. Stephens.

Information on the following parenting-related organizations was added to the Resources for Those Who Work with Parents: Organizations section of NPIN:

- Alive Alone, Inc.
- The Compassionate Friends
- MELD
- National Youth Leadership Council
- Parents Involved Network

Information on the following parenting-related newsletters was added to the Parenting Resources: Newsletters section of NPIN:

- *San Diego Parent*

Several new links to Internet resources were added in the Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents section.

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Parent News for July 1998

July's Feature

Talking to Children about Sexuality and AIDS

by Eva Lefkowitz & Terry Au

In this month's Parent News *Feature, Lefkowitz and Au discuss children, sexuality, and AIDS. As reported in* Education Daily *(Volume 31, No. 88, page 2), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recently issued a statement that said AIDS education should be a mandatory requirement for high school graduation. The AAP further recommended that all college students in teacher training programs be required to take a course in HIV/AIDS education. Clearly, discussion of AIDS is necessary in today's society, but parents are often reluctant to engage their children in a discussion of the issue. In their article, Lefkowitz and Au share how parents can begin these very important discussions with their children.*

I am playing "rough house" with my 5-year-old nephew. He jumps on top of me, stares deeply in my eyes, tries to kiss me on the mouth, and says, "Aunt Eva, let's have sex." As someone who has been studying parent-child communication about sexuality for several years, I responsibly. . . burst out laughing, run out of the room, and say to my sister, "Do you know what your son just said to me?"

Talking to children about sex can be one of the more difficult conversations we have. Often, parents would feel more comfortable having an argument with their children than having to talk about sexuality. Obviously, even those of us who are supposed "experts" in the field have difficulty dealing with it in real life.

Think back to your first conversation with your parents about sex. Was it a relaxed, open discussion where you felt comfortable asking questions and your parents provided candid responses with little embarrassment? No? Was it a tense, stilted conversation in which your parent seemed clearly uncomfortable? A lecture to you about the dangers of sex? Or was the topic never even broached, evasive answers given when you tried to ask questions about it?

Most of us remember what our parents did and didn't tell us about sexuality. And these conversations—direct, indirect, or nonexistent—send us messages about sexuality from an early age. They tell us whether it is okay to talk about sexuality. Whether sexuality is something we should feel comfortable about, or whether we should be embarrassed to even think about it. These messages may stay with us for a long time, and may affect what messages we then pass on to our own children about sexuality.

These days, most parents feel that they want to talk to their children about sexuality. With the AIDS epidemic staring us all in the face, parents worry that not talking to their children about sex may have life-threatening consequences. In fact, research tells us that talking to children about sexuality and AIDS can only help. It leads to improved knowledge, and some evidence suggests that it can lead to changes in beliefs, or even more responsible behavior, such as abstaining from sex or using condoms when sexually active. However, many parents feel at a loss as to how to discuss these delicate topics. If conversations between two adults about sexuality are likely to result in giggles, how then can one begin to discuss these topics with children and adolescents?

There are several things that parents can do to make discussing sexuality and AIDS easier, more relaxed, and more useful for themselves and their children.

Tip #1: Lay the groundwork early.

Parents can help children feel comfortable discussing these issues at an early age. From the beginning, parents, through both explicit and implicit cues, send messages about what is okay to discuss within the family. If when your child asks "where do babies come from?" you act embarrassed and uncomfortable, farming the answer out to your spouse, you are sending your child a message that it is inappropriate to talk about such things, that asking such questions makes people feel uncomfortable, and that the next time he or she has a question, maybe they should keep it to themselves. If instead you answer honestly, perhaps giggling a little bit while explaining this to your child (in a way appropriate to your child's age, of course), you are teaching your child that talking about these things is okay.

Tip #2: Take advantage of children's curiosity, or "seize the moment."

Young children often ask questions related to sexuality. These moments are often more natural times for talking about these issues than sitting down for a "let's talk about sex" conversation. We can use our children's early curiosity as a way to stimulate conversation. Take the example of my sister and her son. My sister was able to use his obvious curiosity to bring up the topic of sexuality. She asked him where he had learned about sex ("from the movies"). She asked him what sex was ("when two people love each other a real lot and they do things together, like kissing and hugging and smooching"). And then she had an opportunity to talk to him about when sexual behavior was appropriate and when it was not. From this conversation, my nephew learned much more than the actual words that my sister spoke. He also learned that talking about sex was okay, and that if he wanted to ask his mother questions in the future, he could do so without embarrassment and would receive honest answers.

Tip #3: Separate AIDS from sex.

People often forget that talking about AIDS does not have to involve discussions of sex. Starting around age 2 or 3 children become very curious about why things happen and how things work. This curiosity includes biological things, such as germs and disease. Therefore, from an early age parents can talk to their children about AIDS transmission without discussing the mechanics of sex. Instead, parents can explain to children that the AIDS virus thrives in some body fluids (e.g., blood), can stay alive but does not multiply rapidly in others (e.g., saliva), and dies virtually instantly and becomes harmless when exposed to air, water, and so on. So, it's important not to touch other people's blood (e.g., from a bloody nose or cuts). Saliva that has been exposed to air does not seem to transmit living AIDS. In fact, sneezing, coughing, and even sharing a drinking glass have not been found to cause AIDS. However, it is important to keep in mind that saliva does transmit other diseases—some very serious (e.g., hepatitis, mononucleosis), and some less serious (e.g., cold, flu). By discussing these issues, parents can teach their children about the mechanisms of the AIDS virus before they feel ready to talk about sexual intercourse.

As children get older and learn about sexual intercourse, they can use their knowledge that the AIDS virus can thrive in sexual fluids to reason about how AIDS is transmitted through sex. However, there is one precaution here. I have noticed recently that many teens know that you can get AIDS through sexual intercourse, but are very confused about the mechanism. For instance, in response to the question "How do you get AIDS from sex?" an 11-year-old girl said, "When you have sex, you share blood, and the AIDS virus, um, travels through the blood and it can go into another person." This answer shows the danger of partial information. She has tried to piece together information about blood (HIV lives in blood) and about sex (you can get AIDS from sex), but has incorrectly filled in the gaps in her knowledge. This child may then erroneously think that as long as there is no blood involved during sex, she will be safe from AIDS.

Tip #4: Don't wait too long to talk about sex.

Some people may think that age 11 is too young to talk to a child about sexuality. Often, parents first begin to talk about sex after an event in their child's life triggers the discussion: the child begins puberty, the child gets a boyfriend/girlfriend, parents find a condom in the child's room. The problem with waiting for an event in the child's life is that this moment may be too late. We know from research that communication about sex between parents and teens is more likely to affect teens' attitudes and behaviors at younger ages and when teens are not yet sexually active. Therefore, it is important to talk to your children about sexuality before you view it as necessary.

Tip #5: Ask open-ended questions and probe gently.

Many rules of general communication with children and adolescents also apply when talking about sexuality and AIDS. First, children do not respond well to one-sided lectures. Often, children will "tune out" these conversations, and therefore will not absorb much of this information.

In addition, it is important that parents try to encourage their children's participation in these conversations. Many parents fall into the habit of asking "did you know" questions, such as, "Did you know that you can get AIDS from having sex?" These types of questions leave little room for interaction or involvement in conversations. Children learn quickly that they need only answer "yes" to these types of questions, and that mom or dad will quickly move on to a new topic. A better type of question is an open-ended one, such as, "How is it that someone can get AIDS from sex?" or "What can you do to prevent getting AIDS from having sex?" With these questions, children are required to become active participants in the conversation, and parents are able to learn what their children do and do not know, making it easier to provide children with more information in the areas that they have less knowledge.

If your child seems to answer your questions with short responses, you can try to probe their answers. For instance, "You say that a condom can prevent the spread of AIDS. Why does using a condom help?" In this way, you can make sure that your child understands the transmission of the virus, and has not simply memorized facts about it.

Tip #6: Share your personal experiences.

When talking about sexuality in particular, parents often find that telling their children something personal about themselves makes their children feel more comfortable talking about sexuality. It does not mean that parents have to tell children every detail about their sex lives, but rather that parents show their children that they respect them enough to share details about their own lives. It could be something lighthearted such as describing the first time that mom and dad kissed during a discussion of first kisses, or it could be something more related to views on premarital sex, such as explaining why mom and dad waited until they were married to have sex.

Tip #7: Become a gossip and a movie critic.

Finally, some parents tell me that whenever they try to talk to their child about sex, he or she always clams up. Mothers will tell me, "I try to ask her if she's had sex yet, but she never will answer me." Parents need to understand that children, particularly teenagers, often have a hard time talking to their parents about personal things. Therefore, when parents ask a 13- or 15-year-old to discuss his or her own sexuality, the child may feel uncomfortable and embarrassed. Instead, an easier way to discuss these issues with a reluctant teenager is to talk about less personal things. For instance, parents can ask whether the child thinks that many of his or her classmates have had sex or have kissed someone.

Parents can also use television programs and movies as a way to talk about these issues. Many parents have had the experience of going to a movie or watching a television show during which they realized that it contained sexually mature themes. Instead of ignoring the content that you and your child have already seen, you can use the experience as an opportunity to discuss whether it was appropriate for that character to have sex with her boyfriend. What could she have done to say no? Why might she have not been ready for sex? If parents watch programs aimed at teenagers (e.g., Dawson's Creek, Party of Five) with their teenage children, they will be aware of what their children are seeing, and can use these opportunities as discussion starting points. Children are often more willing to discuss the relative merits of Sara having sex with Bailey than whether they should have sex with their own boyfriend or girlfriend.

In addition, parents can provide their children with information about sexuality and AIDS. Giving children pamphlets, videotapes, or books about these issues can provide a starting point for discussions. The hope is not to replace conversation with written material, but instead to use the written material as a way to stimulate conversation between parents and adolescents.

Talking about sexuality and AIDS is certainly not simple, but parents should remain hopeful that these conversations will make a difference. Although more schools are incorporating AIDS and sex education into the curriculum, parents bring the unique perspective of their own values and ideas into these conversations. Parents should seize natural opportunities—their child's curiosity, television and movies, etc.—to begin talking about these sensitive issues. Sending a message early on that it's okay for your child to talk to you about sexuality will help insure that he or she continues to go to you with questions and feels comfortable discussing these issues.

Note: This article has intentionally avoided telling parents what they should discuss with their children because it is such a personal issue. Some of the resources listed below under "For More Information" cover what topics parents may want to discuss with their children.

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Kelly, G. F. (1987). *Learning about sex: The contemporary guide for young adults.* Woodbury, NY: Barron's Educational Series.

National AIDS Hotline: 800-342-2437

Web sites

Please note: Searching for topics such as "sexuality" on the Internet can be a treacherous business, as I learned while looking for relevant sites. All of the sites below are intelligently written and aimed at teenagers. However, be very careful if you decide to search the Web for more information with your children present.

Coalition for Positive Sexuality (aimed at teenagers)
http://www.positive.org/cps/Home/index.html

Health Risk Factors for Adolescents
http://education.indiana.edu/cas/adol/risk.html

Just Say Yes (a Web site designed to help children with whatever decision they make about sex) http://www.shsl.com/Internet/supcourt/21.html

Mediconsult.com (a site that lists books about sexuality and AIDS that are appropriate for children of different ages)
http://www.mediconsult.com/noframes/aids/shareware/health canada/have.html

Sexuality and your child—For children ages 3 to 7
http://muextension.missouri.edu/xplor/hesguide/humanrel/gh6002.htm

For more information:

ERIC/EECE and the National Parent Information Network
University of Illinois
Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign, IL 61820-7469
Telephone: 800-583-4135
Internet: http://npin.org/
Internet: http://ericeece.org/

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Community Spotlight

Program Evaluation: Important But Not Easy

We frequently receive questions about evaluation methods for community or family programs. The following article highlights some of the issues that need to be addressed when evaluating human service programs and also provides additional resources that may be helpful.

In much of the human service field, it is necessary to justify and demonstrate the effectiveness of the programs that serve children, families, and communities. Funders want to know that the money they are spending is producing results and that programs are accountable for the dollars that are spent. Problems often arise, however, when those funding the program do not understand the complexities of outcome evaluation or when they have different definitions of outcomes than those involved within the programs. A recent article by Miriam J. Landsman in the Spring 1998 issue of *The Prevention Report* addresses some of the concerns regarding outcome evaluation of programs. Key points raised in Landsman's article are summarized here.

According to Landsman (1998), "outcome evaluation is the method for measuring how well a program is staying on track and progressing toward the achievement of desired results" (p. 25). While she is supportive and encouraged by the emphasis on outcome evaluation, she is concerned about the oversimplification of evaluation and the avoidance of the complex conceptual and methodological issues that arise with evaluation.

Specifically, Landsman describes the following dilemmas for community-based programs as they struggle to measure the effectiveness of their programs.

> *Defining Outcomes.* While it is generally agreed that stakeholders define the program's outcomes, this group varies in who is included. Stakeholders can include funders, government agencies, community members, program administrators, staff, and users. As a result, it is often difficult to reach a shared consensus on the results for which the program will be held accountable. In addition, because program developers often have short notice on submitting their program ideas, there is often little time for soliciting input from others. This can often lead to outcome definition which does not flow logically from the program itself and which is not appropriate or feasible within time and resource constraints. Also, because of the lack of input from other groups, many evaluation initiatives are not coordinated with all relevant groups (e.g., local initiatives have program goals and outcomes which do not fit with state initiatives).
>
> *Outcomes beyond the Scope of the Program.* Because of increasing pressures to justify the worth of a program in order to secure or maintain funding, outcomes are often overstated. For example, Landsman points out that while a community-based center may be successful in aiding a small number of families to help their children get to school on time, it is unlikely that the center can impact the rate of graduation for the whole county or state for the year of

funding. Therefore, it is important to consider the level at which outcomes can be expected and the timing in which those outcomes can be reached. The two key variables which will impact these decisions and the scope of the program are the amount of resources and the length of the funding period. This means that programs funded from year-to-year should focus on short-term outcomes for program participants, while broadly funded community initiatives can identify outcome changes at the community level over an extended period of time.

Prevention as Primary Outcome. Tied in with the previous dilemma is defining prevention as the primary outcome. While most programs are predicated on the basis of preventing socially undesirable and costly events from occurring, it is extremely difficult to demonstrate that any program leads to some event *not* occurring. For example, in order to adequately assess whether a program leads to the prevention of juvenile offenses among at-risk youth, it is necessary to have control or comparison groups to measure in addition to those defined as at-risk. However, such an undertaking is more costly and time intensive because more data are needed.

Balance between Outcome Evaluation and Resource Allocation. One of the greatest challenges for programs is to move from the stage of identifying outcomes and ways to measure those outcomes to implementing a system of gathering, analyzing, and reporting the data that is useful to the program. The effort involved in compiling, analyzing, and presenting data is often underestimated. Therefore, it is important to allocate enough and appropriate resources (staff time, equipment, software, and technical resources) to evaluation activities in order to demonstrate results.

Use of Outcomes. When programs are asked to develop measurable outcomes and report on their results, they are placing themselves at risk and making themselves vulnerable since the results can be used against them. Because of the time and resources necessary to effectively measure progress, programs must be given adequate time to develop outcomes and address implementation issues. If outcomes are used as a threat, any program effectiveness may be lost as programs seek to establish goals that are easy to achieve.

Landsman offers the following suggestions for addressing some of these dilemmas:

If there are specific desired outcomes for the program, make these clear during the planning process so that activities and interventions can be designed to meet them.

When developing your own program outcomes, be sure that they are clear, measurable, logically related to program activities, and appropriate to the level and time period of funding.

For prevention programs, include measures of positive change (improved family relations, for example) instead of relying solely on measuring the avoidance of negative events.

Be aware of the difference between descriptive program results and a causal relationship between programs and outcomes.

Allocate sufficient resources to the collection, analysis, and reporting of data.

Use outcomes for their strengths (rewards) rather than as threats to the program.

To see the complete article, go to the National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice.

For more information on community program evaluation:

Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships
Johns Hopkins University
3505 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
Telephone: 410-516-8800

Family Resource Coalition of America
20 N. Wacker Dr., Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60606
Telephone: 312-338-0900
Email: frca@frca.org

National Center for Family Literacy
Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200
325 West Main St.
Louisville, KY 40202-4251
Telephone: 502-584-1133

National Head Start Association
201 N. Union St., Suite 320
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone: 703-739-0875

RMC Research Corporation
1000 Market St.
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Telephone: 603-422-8888

Source

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Prepared for *Parent News* by Dawn Ramsburg.

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Parent News for July 1998

Of Interest

New Study on Children's Perceptions of Race and Class on Television

by Debbie Reese

For decades, educators and parents have expressed concern over the ways in which people are portrayed on television. There was a fear that children were getting a skewed concept about people's abilities and character based on stereotypical representations of gender, race, or class. This fear led to a number of research studies that analyzed the television roles of men, women, people of color, and people of various socio-economic levels.

Berry and Asamen's edited volume *Children & Television: Images in a Changing Sociocultural World* (1993) examines many issues related to diversity and representation. Greenberg and Brand's chapter looks at Saturday morning television programs aired on ABC, CBS, and NBC during April of 1992. Of twenty programs, three featured regularly appearing African Americans, one featured a Hispanic American, and there were no Asian or Native Americans.

Calvert's (1997) research on gender and ethnic portrayals in Saturday morning television programs found that male characters spoke an average of 10 minutes and 46 seconds, while female characters spoke an average of 2 minutes and 55 seconds. Caucasian and ethnic minority representation in the programs was 73.6% and 26.4%, respectively. Ethnic minority females were not represented in major roles on the ABC and NBC networks, but were represented on CBS and Fox 16% and 5% of the time, respectively.

Children Now, a nonpartisan, independent organization for children, recently released *A Different World: Children's Perceptions of Race and Class in Media*. This book contains the results of a nationwide survey for which researchers polled 1,200 children between the ages of 10 and 17.

Detailed information on the study is available at the Children Now Web site. (http://www.childrennow.org/) Some key findings include:

- Children of all races watch a great deal of television including a wide variety of programs.
- African-American children strongly feel that entertainment media represent their race more fairly than the news media (47% to 25%). Asian children feel the opposite, slightly favoring the news media (36% to 28%). Both White and Latino children are split between the two.
- Children of color primarily choose African-Americans as those they admire, and White children primarily choose White television figures as their favorites.
- When asked why they admire a character, most children first say "because they are funny." After

that, children of color are most likely to say "because I look up to them," and White children are more likely to say "because they act the way I want to act."

- White and African-American children say they see people of their race on television while Latino and Asian children are much less likely to see their race represented.
- Children think that White characters on entertainment television programs are most likely to be shown in a positive way while Latino characters are most likely to be negatively portrayed.
- Children across all races associate positive characteristics more with the White characters they see on television and negative characteristics more with the minority characters.
- All children agree that the roles of boss, secretary, police officer, and doctor in television programs are usually played by White people while the roles of criminal and maid/janitor on television are usually played by African-Americans. Never do children see Latino or Asian characters as the dominant person in the listed roles.
- Children of color think families on television have more money than their families, while White children are equally likely to say that families on TV have the same amount of money as their families. When asked whether race or money divide people in America more, White children are more likely to say money than race, while African-American, Latino, and Asian children are split between the two.
- Although children think that all races are shown doing "both" good and bad things on the news, they agree that the news media tends to portray African-American and Latino people more negatively than White and Asian people.
- When looking at news portrayals of teenagers of different races, feelings become even stronger. Children are even more likely to see White and Asian teenagers portrayed mostly positively and to see African-American and Latino teenagers portrayed mostly negatively.
- Large majorities of African-American, Asian, and Latino children feel there should be more people of their race as newscasters, while most White children feel there are enough White newscasters.

While there is considerable debate regarding the extent to which television affects children's attitudes and behaviors, parents are encouraged to monitor their children's viewing and to watch alongside the child. This allows for discussion that can counter negative messages children may see in television programs.

Many online resources are available to help parents guide their children's television viewing. Some are:

Guidelines for Family Television Viewing (Available in English and Chinese.)
http://ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1990/famtv90.html

Television Violence: Content, Context, and Consequences, by Amy Aidman
http://ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1997/aidman97.html

What Do Parents Need to Know about Children's Television Viewing?
http://www.aspensys.com/eric/resources/parent/tv.html

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Of Interest

No-Recess Policies Being Implemented in U.S. School Districts

by Dawn Ramsburg

A trend seems to be affecting school districts in the United States—many are beginning to implement "no recess" policies under the belief that "recess is a waste of time that would be better spent on academics" (Johnson, 1998, p. A1). This belief is being fueled by increased pressures on school districts to show improved academic gains when compared to schools around the globe. In addition, administrators cite a "fear of lawsuits if children become injured, a concern over children's safety from strangers around school grounds, and a shortage of people to supervise the children during recess" (Johnson, 1998, p. A1).

School districts in Atlanta, New York, Chicago, New Jersey, and Connecticut are opting to eliminate recess, even to the point of building new schools in their districts without playgrounds. According to Benjamin O. Canada, the superintendent of Atlanta schools, "We are intent on improving academic performance and you don't do that by having kids hang on monkey bars" (Johnson, 1998, p. A1).

In contrast to these views, child development researchers cite many benefits of having a recess time during the school day. According to Dr. Tony Pellegrini, a professor of child development at the University of Georgia, "Every study shows that children are more attentive after recess" (Johnson, 1998, p. A16). Pellegrini adds that not having a recess during the school day is almost inhumane because children are being kept confined in their classrooms for hours each day. Prolonged periods of confinement in elementary classrooms have been found to lead to increased fidgeting, restlessness, and subsequent inability to concentrate (Pellegrini & Davis, 1993).

Recess has also been found to be important for aspects of children's development. According to Pellegrini and Glickman (1989), "recess is one of the few times during the day when children are free to exhibit a wide range of social competencies such as sharing, cooperation, negative and passive language in a context they see meaningful." (p. 24). These skills are then transferred to the classroom and beyond. For example, a common playground game, "chase," has been linked to academic success. According to Pellegrini and Glickman, "Children learn to cooperate to the extent that the play requires cooperation and they learn to solve problems in such forms of play. They realize that in order to sustain their chase play with peers, they must take turns being the chaser or the chased. If they refuse to change roles, the game ends. This reciprocating role is a powerful predictor of the ability to cooperate and view events from different perspectives" (p. 24).

Dr. Olga Jarrett, professor of child development at Georgia State University, wonders about the opportunity for such learning and for interacting with other children without recess. "Many children today go home after school and sit in front of the television rather than play outside" (Johnson, 1998, p. A16). According to the Children's Defense Fund (1998), nearly 5 million children are home alone after school. Jarrett points out that "when children are used to playing together, they figure out a way to handle differences. But, these days, children are increasingly looking for an adult to settle disputes. Their sense of independence is being lost in the heavily structured world of childhood" (Johnson, 1998, p. A16).

Finally, the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) released its physical activity guidelines for pre-adolescent children in May 1998. According to the NASPE guidelines:

- Children need at least 60 minutes of developmentally appropriate physical activity.
- Children should experience a variety of activities of various levels of intensity. These activities should be intermittent, alternating moderate to vigorous activity with brief periods of rest and recovery.
- Extended periods of inactivity are not developmentally appropriate for children.

These guidelines are based on the concept that children have unique characteristics which differ from adults, including shorter attention spans and a need for a wide variety of experiences for learning ("NASPE releases," 1998). As a society who is concerned about the health risks of obesity, it is also important to note that children will likely learn to be inactive as adults if they are not provided with opportunities to be active when they are young. The "no recess" policies being implemented in various parts of the country seem to be contrary to the physical and learning need of elementary school children.

It may be helpful for adults to step back and reflect on the break periods which are an important part of our day. Just as judges and lawyers take a recess during court sessions and office workers take breaks during the day to relax and recharge, children also need a time for recess. This may mean that educators and parents will need to reexamine the valuable experiences that take place outside of the classroom and compromise between what is developmentally and academically important for children.

For more information:

Appropriate Physical Activity for Elementary School Children: Executive Summary from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education
http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/PhysicalActivity.htm

Developmentally Appropriate Programming For School-Age Children from the National Network for Child Care
http://www.nncc.org/SACC/dev.approp.sac.html

School Recess and Playground Behavior: Educational and Developmental Roles by Anthony D. Pellegrini
http://www.sunypress.edu/sunyp/backads/html/pellegrinirecess.html

Recess and Social Development by Dr. Tom Jambor
http://www.earlychildhood.com/articles/artrasd.html

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Of Interest

New IDEA Bill Clarifies Parental Role in School Meetings for Special Education Students

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On June 4, 1997, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 was signed into law. This law contained numerous amendments to the original IDEA law passed in the 1970s, attempting to address some of the weaknesses of the old legislation. New provisions cover such issues as discipline, performance goals and indicators, the Individual Education Plan (IEP), student evaluations, race disproportionality, and parent participation. For an overview of the new legislation, see the Office of Special Education Programs:
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/IDEA/geninfo.html

The issue of parental notification is of key importance because schools have often been confused over when they must notify parents in discussions regarding students. This confusion occurs in the context of a larger push to increase parental involvement in schools across the country. According to IDEA '97, "in all states, parents will now be included in groups making eligibility and placement decisions about children with disabilities." Previously, in some states, parents only had a right to be included in IEP meetings. Parents also have a right to consent to periodic re-evaluations of their children's program, in addition to initial evaluations.

Currently, parents of children with disabilities rarely get regular reports from schools on their child's progress in achieving academic goals set forth in the IEP. The new law aims to increase parental involvement by requiring the regular progress reports that are commonly made for other children.

While these are important steps for the IDEA legislation, it is important to keep in mind that all parents have particular rights and responsibilities regarding their children's education. The National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has issued standards regarding parent involvement in schools which address these further:
http://www.pta.org/programs/invstand.htm

For more information:

IDEA 97: Your Rights and Responsibilities
http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/idea97_may98.html

Office of Special Education Programs: IDEA '97 Home Page
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/IDEA/index.html

Prepared for *Parent News* by Dawn Ramsburg.

Parent News for July 1998

Of Interest

1997 National Education Goals Report: Are We Meeting Goal One?

In 1990, eight National Education Goals were adopted as a framework for education reform and for promoting the systemic changes needed to ensure equitable educational opportunities and high levels of educational achievement for all students (*National Education Goals Report*, 1997). These Goals are:

1. Ready to Learn
2. School Completion
3. Student Achievement and Citizenship
4. Teacher Education and Professional Development
5. Mathematics and Science
6. Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning
7. Safe and Disciplined, Alcohol- and Drug-Free Schools
8. Parental Participation

To measure the progress toward reaching these Goals, the National Education Goals Panel was created. This bipartisan panel is comprised of eight Governors, four members of Congress, four state legislators, and two Presidential appointees..The responsibilities of the panel include:

- Reporting on national and state progress toward the Goals over a 10-year period;
- Working to establish a system of high academic standards and assessments;
- Identifying actions for federal, state, and local governments to take; and,
- Building a nationwide, bipartisan consensus to achieve the Goals.

Each year, the National Education Goals Panel produces a report which describes the progress toward each of the eight goals. The findings on Goal One from the 1997 report are highlighted in the remainder of this article.

Goal One: Ready to Learn

By the year 2000, all children will start school ready to learn.

To meet this goal, the following objectives were identified by the National Education Goals Panel:

- All children will have access to high-quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs that help children prepare for school.
- Every parent in the United States will be a child's first teacher and devote time each day to helping the preschool child learn, and parents will have access to the training and support they need.
- Children will receive the nutrition, physical activity experiences, and health care needed to arrive at

school with healthy minds and bodies and to maintain the mental alertness necessary to be prepared to learn, and the number of low-birthweight babies will be significantly reduced through enhanced prenatal health systems.

According to the *1997 National Education Goals Report,* the national performance has improved significantly in the following areas which relate to Goal One:

- The proportion of infants born with one or more health risks has decreased from 37% to 34% (this represents a difference of at least 61,900 children who were born with a healthier start).
- More 2-year-olds have been fully immunized against preventable childhood diseases (the number of children immunized in 1996 increased to 78% from 75% in 1994).
- More families are reading and telling stories to their children on a regular basis (72% of preschoolers were read to or told stories regularly in 1996 compared with 66% in 1993).

Despite these positive findings, the report also indicates that since the Goals were established, the gap in preschool participation rates between high- and low-income families has not been reduced (in 1991, 45% of 3- to 5-year-olds from low-income families were enrolled in preschool programs compared to 73% of children from high-income families; this difference had not changed in 1996).

In addition to identifying the national progress toward meeting Goal One, the *1997 National Education Goals Report* also measures how well the states (including the District of Columbia) and jurisdictions (including U.S. territories) are meeting the objectives. According to this report, since baselines were established for the state indicators, significant improvements have occurred in the areas related to the Ready to Learn goal:

- Forty states reduced the percentage of infants born with one or more health risks.
- Fifty-four jurisdictions increased the number of mothers receiving prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy.
- The proportion of children with disabilities participating in preschool rose in 46 states.

Unfortunately, the report also finds that in 47 jurisdictions, the number of children born with low birthweight increased. In addition, the number of immunizations has not changed markedly over time as 45 states showed no change in the proportion of 2-year-olds fully immunized.

Are We Meeting Goal One?

The indicators used to measure Goal One underscore the belief that arriving at school healthy and developmentally ready to participate in classroom activities plays an important part in a child's school experiences (Lewit & Schuurmann Baker, 1995). While there has been some progress toward reaching Goal One as summarized above, it is too soon to conclude whether the goal will be met by the year 2000.

Part of the reason for not being able to make this conclusion is that there is still disagreement over what constitutes being "ready to learn." This is because Goal One combines two historically different concepts—readiness for learning and readiness for school. In general, *readiness to learn* has been thought of as the "level of development at which an individual (of any age) is ready to undertake the learning of specific materials" (Lewit & Schuurmann Baker, 1995). When applied to a population or group, it refers to the age at which the average person displays a specific ability or capacity. This concept of readiness has not been very helpful in assessing progress toward the national goal since simply being judged "ready to learn" will not guarantee success in school. In fact, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has pointed out, "Every child, except in extreme instances of abuse, neglect, or disability, enters school ready to learn" (Lewit & Schuurmann Baker, 1995).

On the other hand, the concept of *readiness for school* adds to the concept of readiness for learning a standard of physical, intellectual, and social development that enables children to fulfill school requirements and to assimilate a school's curriculum. Unfortunately, while some idea of a standard is nearly universal in readiness discussions, there is little agreement as to exactly what that standard should include. For some schools, the standard is based on standardized tests, while the majority of schools have historically used the age of the child as the standard.

There are several problems with developing a standard for evaluating readiness for school. First, holding children to a standard introduces the possibility that children will be judged not ready because of the substantial variability in the rate of normal child development (Lewit & Schuurmann Baker, 1995). That is, since we know that not all children of the same age develop in the same way or at the same pace, no one standard can be applied accurately to all children. Second, because children are exposed to a variety of settings and situations during their preschool years, they are going to differ in their school readiness. This range of experiences again makes it difficult to account for all children with one standard. Third, because different schools have different requirements and curricula, children who may be considered ready for some schools might be judged unready for others. Fourth, whether children themselves are ready for school may not be an important issue in flexible school systems which are designed to accommodate entering children with different levels of ability and maturation (Lewit & Schuurmann Baker, 1995).

Conclusion

As long as there is conflict over what constitutes being "ready to learn," it will be hard to assess exactly when Goal One has been met. In addition, it is important to remember that the responsibility for school readiness does not lie solely with the children, but also means that schools must learn to be "ready" for children. Therefore, it is important that everyone—teachers, parents, administrators, and policymakers—work together to identify what it means to be "ready to learn."

Additional Resources on School Readiness

ReadyWeb

An electronic collection of resources on school readiness sponsored by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. ReadyWeb was created in 1995 but has recently been reorganized. See the article, *The New ReadyWeb Is Now Ready!*, in this issue of *Parent News* for more information about ReadyWeb.
http://readyweb.crc.uiuc.edu/

Readiness: Children and Schools
ERIC Digest by Lilian G. Katz.
http://ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1991/katz91.html

National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners
Available from:
National Education Goals Panel
1255 22nd St. NW, Suite 502
Washington, DC 20037
Telephone: 202-724-0015
Internet: http://www.negp.gov/

Sources

Lewit, Eugene M., & Schuurmann Baker, Linda. (1995). School readiness. *Future of Children*, 5(2), 128-139. Also available: http://www.futureofchildren.org/cri/09cri.htm [1998, June 30].

National Education Goals Panel. (1997). *National education goals: Building a nation of learners* [Online]. Available: http://www.negp.gov/WEBPG110.htm [1998, June 30].

Prepared for *Parent News* by Dawn Ramsburg.

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Of Interest

The New ReadyWeb Is Now Ready!

by Bernard Cesarone

If you're looking for resources related to school readiness, there's a place to go on the World Wide Web. That place is ReadyWeb, a collection of readiness resources that is sponsored by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (ERIC/EECE). The URL for ReadyWeb is:

http://readyweb.crc.uiuc.edu/

ReadyWeb was created in 1995 as a special project of ERIC/EECE. Those of you who have visited ReadyWeb will note that the URL given above is a new one. ReadyWeb was formerly located at http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/readyweb/readyweb.html. We're sure that visitors to ReadyWeb—just like the staff at ERIC/EECE!—will be pleased to use this less unwieldy address.

The new URL coincides with a reorganization of the ReadyWeb resources that takes effect on July 1, 1998 (or shortly thereafter; some of the graphics of the site may be "fine-tuned" throughout the month). ReadyWeb was formerly organized into two main sections, "Helping Children Get Ready for School" and "Helping Schools Get Ready for Children," plus an additional section consisting of ERIC bibliographies on readiness. The new format of ReadyWeb preserves some of this useful distinction, but creates further, more manageable (we hope!) divisions. See the ERIC Digest by Lilian Katz (1991) for more information on the distinction between getting children ready for school and getting schools ready for children.

When you visit the **ReadyWeb home page**, you will now see four menu items:

* About ReadyWeb
* Virtual Library
* ERIC Bibliographies on School Readiness
* Search ReadyWeb

The **About ReadyWeb** section includes a more complete description of the project's aims and clearer contact information than were provided on the old site.

(Skipping the second item for a moment,) ReadyWeb still contains **ERIC Bibliographies on School Readiness.** The bibliographies are prepared from searches of the ERIC database. These searches were recently expanded to include citations on "learning readiness" as well as on "school readiness." (For more information on the distinction between school readiness and learning readiness, see Lewit and Baker [1995].) The bibliographies are divided into documents and journal articles, and are prepared individually by year, starting with 1993. The citations in these bibliographies include:

* bibliographic information (such as author, title, publisher, date of publication,

etc.)
* an abstract of the document or article
* ERIC indexing terms assigned to the document or article

Note that these are bibliographic citations only. You will still need to obtain a copy of the document or journal article. (In a few instances, in which ReadyWeb has received appropriate reproduction permissions, the article or document will be available on the Web site.) Instructions on how to do this are available in the ERIC Bibliographic section of ReadyWeb.

The **Search ReadyWeb** feature allows users to search for words in the text of any page on ReadyWeb. This search feature is currently fairly basic. However, ERIC/EECE is experimenting with a new, more sophisticated search engine which should allow ReadyWeb users to execute more focused searches. This new engine should be available sometime around late summer or early autumn 1998.

Now, to return to that second menu item: The **Virtual Library** is the heart of ReadyWeb. The Virtual Library is divided into three sections:

(1) Tips for parents;
(2) Research, statistics, and definitions; and
(3) Getting schools ready for children.

As the Virtual Library continues to grow, the number of these sections may increase or they may be rearranged in different ways.

The resources in the ReadyWeb Virtual Library vary in length. Some are articles from journals, some are brochure-like publications, some are longer publications. Most of these resources are actually located on ReadyWeb (i.e., the electronic files are stored on the ReadyWeb Web server), although some are hyperlinks to resources elsewhere on the Web. But all of these resources are full-text. That is, once you've located a title you want in the ReadyWeb Virtual Library, you can read the text right there. Any copyright or distribution restrictions (rare) will be indicated at the bottom of the document.

The "Tips for parents" section of the ReadyWeb Virtual Library contains such items as:

* *Back to School Time: Tips to Help Children Adjust,* a short (two-page equivalent) publication by the National Association for the Education of Young Children that offers seven suggestions each for parents and teachers to help children adjust to going back to school.

* *Helping Your Child Get Ready for School,* a longer publication (50+ pages in print) in the "Helping Your Child" series from the U.S. Department of Education that describes school readiness and provides activities to do with your children at various age levels.

* *Preparing Children with Disabilities for School,* a 1991 ERIC Digest that summarizes information on the roles of the federal government, the family, and teachers in preparing young children with disabilities for school.

A sample of titles in the "Research, statistics, and definitions" section is:

* *Principles and Recommendations for Early Childhood Assessments,* a 40-page

report published in 1998 by the National Education Goals Panel that identifies the technical requirements for four assessment purposes and suggests specific ways for states, schools, and communities to gather and use assessment data well.

* *Developmental Disabilities and the Concept of School Readiness,* an article from the journal *Early Education and Development* that discusses the relevance of concepts of readiness to children with disabilities.

The "Getting schools ready for children" section contains such items as:

* *Getting Schools Ready for Children: The Other Side of the Readiness Goal,* a report by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) that identifies changes that schools must make in their kindergarten and primary programs if they are to contribute to, rather than hinder, progress toward achieving Goal 1.

* *Will the National Education Goals Improve the Progress of English Language Learners?,* an ERIC Digest that examines how instruction and assessment practices must improve if children whose native language is not English are to meet the National Education Goal on school readiness (and other goals).

So this is a sampling of the resources that you can find on ReadyWeb. The ERIC/EECE staff seeks out readiness-related documents in the public domain to include in the ReadyWeb Virtual Library, and also contacts copyright holders of other documents and articles for permission to include their publications. ERIC/EECE hopes to add several new items to the Virtual Library each month.

If you have suggestions for items to be included in ReadyWeb, or if you have any other comments or questions about ReadyWeb, the ReadyWeb Webmaster is ready and willing to receive them at:

readyweb@ericps.crc.uiuc.edu

Let us know what you think!

For More Information:

Katz, Lilian G. (1991). *Readiness: Children and schools.* ERIC Digest. Champaign, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. Also available: http://ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1991/katz91.html [1998, June 30].

Lewit, Eugene M., & Schuurmann Baker, Linda. (1995). School readiness. *Future of Children*, 5(2), 128-139. Also available: http://www.futureofchildren.org/cri/09cri.htm [1998, June 30].

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Of Interest

Children's Books

The ERIC system offers documents called "Information Guides" on a broad range of topics related to education. Of relevance to children's literature is an ERIC Info Guide called "Children's Literature" written by Sue A. Clary in 1994 (updated on November 15, 1995, by Twana Weiler). This online info guide contains links to many Web sites about children's literature. It is available online at:

http://ericir.syr.edu/cgi-bin/markup_infoguides/Alphabetical_List_of_InfoGuides/Children's_Lit-11.95

Below are children's books on the following topics: AIDS, television, and recess.

Anna Banana: 101 Jump-Rope Rhymes, by Joanna Cole, illustrated by Alan Tiegreen (Published in 1989 by William Morrow & Co.). Ages: 9-12.

Cat's Cradle, Owl's Eyes: A Book of String Games, by Camilla Gryski and Tom Sankey (Published in 1987 by William Morrow & Co.). Ages: 9-12.

Playground Games (Mad Jack), by Jimmy Symonds, illustrated by Heather Clarke (Published in 1996 by Dorling Kindersley). Ages: 9-12.

Recess Mess (First Grade Friends, Hello Reader Level 1), by Grace MacCarone, illustrated by Betsy Lewin (Published in 1996 by Scholastic Trade). Ages: 4-8.

AIDS & HIV: Risky Business (Teen Issues), by Daniel Jussim (Published in1997 by Enslow Publishers). Ages: Young Adult.

AIDS: A Handbook for the Future, by Marianne Levert (Published in 1996 byMillbrook Press). Ages: Young Adult.

Be a Friend: Children Who Live with HIV Speak, edited by Lori Wiener, compiled by Aprille Best and Philip A. Pizzo (Published in 1996 by Albert Whitman & Company). Ages: 9-12.

Carmine's Story: A Book about a Boy with AIDS (Meeting the Challenge), by Arlene Schulman (Published in 1997 by Lerner Publications Company). Ages: 4-8.

The Eagle Kite: A Novel (Laurel-Leaf Books), by Paula Fox (Published in 1996 by Dell). Ages: Young Adult.

Something Terrible Happened: A Novel, by Barbara Ann Porte (Published in 1994 by Orchard Books). Ages: Young Adult.

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

Martinez, Susanne, Ed.; Dahl, Kathryn Kline, Ed. (1998). *The State of America's Children Yearbook: 1998.*

This Children's Defense Fund 1998 report on the well-being of America's children highlights the critical need for renewed commitment to children by all sectors of society. The introduction describes health and educational outcomes for poor children and calls for adults to commit their energies to redirect their priorities and develop solutions to these problems. The report details the following: (1) family income, including the pervasiveness of child poverty, the impact of welfare reform, and inadequate child support; (2) child health, including the problem of uninsured children, new developments in Medicaid coverage, managed care, and maternal and child health; (3) child care, describing federal, state, and local initiatives, uneven state progress, and recent research findings; (4) child nutrition, including food stamp reductions, state procedures, problems of immigrant children, and subsidized meal programs; (5) children and families in crisis, including permanency planning, kinship care, community partnerships, special population needs, and focusing on outcomes; (6) violence committed to and by children, including the move toward stiffer penalties for juvenile offenders and prevention measures; and (7) adolescent pregnancy. Two appendices provide tabulated data on children nationwide and by state, covering areas such as poverty, maternal and infant health, adolescent childbearing, youth unemployment, government aid participation, child support, Head Start enrollment, child abuse and neglect, and firearm deaths. Web sites of interest to child advocates are listed. PS026456

CDF Publications
P.O. Box 90500
Washington, DC 20090-0500
Telephone: 202-628-8787
Fax: 202-628-8333
($14.95, plus $2 shipping and handling. DC residents must add 5.75% sales tax.)

How to Evaluate Your Child's Education: Falling through the Cracks. A Guide for Every Parent [Video]. (1996)

Parents want the best for their children, and education is key to that success. This video is designed to help parents assist their children's educational success by assessing children's learning strengths and weaknesses. The video first presents five potential problem areas and symptoms that may be manifested by the student: (1) unchallenged; (2) passive learning; (3) skill gaps; (4) behavioral concerns; and (5) learning differences. The video then provides instructions for using the enclosed inventory sheet to evaluate the child in the five mentioned areas. Instructions include: (1) writing down observations, feelings, and concerns in one or more of the five areas; (2) contacting the teacher for his or her specific observations or comments in any of the five areas; (3) reviewing the completed inventory and, if needed, scheduling an appointment with a professional to clarify concerns. PS026016

Campbell-Malone Enterprise
1750 South Brentwood, Suite 406
St. Louis, MO 63144
(VHS-video, $14.99)

Li, Jiali; Bennett, Neil. (1998). ***Young Children in Poverty: A Statistical Update (March 1998 Edition).***

This report updates the National Center for Children in Poverty's (NCCP) 1996 volume, "One in Four: America's Young Poor," and continues a series of reports and statistical updates about child poverty in the United States. The highlights of this update include a new profile of the extremely poor, poor, and near poor population of young children; the use of an alternative measure of young child poverty that provides new insights into the impact of programs and policies on the economic well-being of young children; and a brief examination of why the poverty rate among young children has decreased since 1993. Among the findings noted in the report are the following: (1) the poverty rate for young children and the number of poor young children have declined since 1993, yet remain high; (2) single parenthood, low educational attainment, part-time or no employment, and low wages each increase the risk of being poor, but taken together can be economically devastating; (3) black and Hispanic young children are much more likely to be poor than are white young children, with the young child poverty rate increasing fastest among Hispanics; (4) about one-third of all poor young children live with married parents; (5) young children living in mother-only families are particularly vulnerable to the risk of poverty; (6) young children with well-educated parents are much less likely to be poor, but high school graduation is not enough to insure against poverty; and (7) over three-fifths of poor young children live in families in which at least one parent is employed. The report also notes that the most likely explanation for the decline in the official poverty rate between 1993 and 1996 is that a greater proportion of the population was employed. PS026405

NCCP/Publications
154 Haven Ave.
New York, NY 10032
Telephone: 212-304-7100
Fax: 212-544-4200 or 212-544-4201
Email: nccp@columbia.edu
Internet: http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/
($5. Make checks payable to Columbia University.)

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Resources for Parents

Book Summaries and Reviews

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1. Reppucci, N. Dickon; Britner, Preston A.; Woolard, Jennifer L. (1997). ***Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect through Parent Education.*** **Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company, P.O. Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285-0624 (Stock No. 2894, $25.95).**

In 1993, the Community Research Group (CRG) at the University of Virginia was provided the opportunity to gather systematic information on parent education and family support programs for the prevention of abuse and neglect throughout Virginia. Based on the group's research into 25 distinct parenting programs, this book outlines an empowering approach to service delivery in child abuse prevention programs. The book provides detailed case studies and dozens of practical suggestions for planning, evaluating, and strengthening parent education programming. Following an introduction summarizing child abuse statistics, types of prevention, and the CRG project, the chapters of the book are: (1) "Parent Education and Family Support for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment: What We Know and What We Don't Know" (with Sarah Cook); (2) "Curricula and Their Evaluation: Assumptions Underlying Parent Education"; (3) "Evaluation for the Prevention Educator"; (4) "Measurement Tools for Self-Evaluation"; (5) "Overview of Diverse Parent Education Efforts"; (6) "Case Studies of Successful Parent Education Programs"; (7) "Portsmouth's Good Beginnings: A Case Study of Outcome Evaluation"; (8) "Key Components of Successful Programs"; and (9) "A Policy Agenda for Child Maltreatment Prevention." Appendices include a sample program curriculum, targeted handouts for program personnel, and comprehensive lists of program evaluation measures. (Contains 178 references.) PS026519

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2. Tierney, Nancy Leigh. (1997). ***Robbed of Humanity: Lives of Guatemalan Street Children.*** **Pangaea, 226 Wheeler St. South, St. Paul, MN 55105; Telephone: 612-690-3320; Fax: 612-690-1485; Internet: pangaea.org ($16).**

The situation for "street children" has degenerated over the past two decades following the economic and political transitions in much of Latin America. Drawing on scholarly materials, interviews with child rights advocates, and the words of the children themselves, this book explores the abuse, limited choices, despair, loyalty, and remarkable survival skills of street children in Guatemala--youths with weak or broken ties to their families, who live and work on the streets and rarely, if ever, return to their homes. The socio-political context influencing the plight of street children is also examined. The work levels an indictment at the Guatemalan government, citing its acts, its violation of its own laws and constitution, and its miserly allocation of funds for children's welfare. Chapters in the book are: (1) "The Scene," examining the presence of street children in Guatemala, the circumstances that bring them to the street, and detrimental shifts in government during the past 30 years; (2) "A Street Child's Reality," using the stories of and interviews with individual children to explore the home environment that landed them in the streets, and the harsh conditions encountered there; (3) "At the Mercy of the State: Street Children and the Government of Guatemala," contrasting the child protection ideal as proposed by Guatemala's constitution with the reality of government neglect and terror, and exploring the contradictions posed by the country's "Minor's Code" and its juvenile justice policy; (4) "Human Rights and the Guatemalan Street Child," chronicling patterns of abuses involving city and national police as well as harassment and intimidation of child advocate workers; (5) "The Construction of Social Indifference: Shaping Images of Street Children," examining historical, religious, and media models of childhood that encourage the stigmatization of street children and their families, and contrasting them with more favorable Mayan concepts of childhood; (6) "The Silent Majority: The Response of Private Citizens to Street Children," exploring the deeper, more personal motives held by private citizens in Guatemala that may prevent the effective protest of abuse against street children; and (7) "Restoring Humanity," examining ways to improve the well-being of street children, which will require efforts on several fronts to alleviate both the immediate conditions of these children and larger social conditions and attitudes. PS026504

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3. Coughlin, Pamela A.; Hansen, Kristen A.; Heller, Dinah; Kaufmann, Roxane K.; Stolberg, Judith Rothschild; Walsh, Kate Burke. (1997). ***Creating Child-Centered Classrooms: 3-5 Year Olds. Step By Step: A Program for Children and Families.*** **Children's Resources International, Inc., 2262 Hall Place NW, Suite 205, Washington, DC 20007; Telephone: 800-625-2448 or 202-625-2508; Fax: 202-625-2509; Email: CRINC@AOL.COM ($39.95, plus $4.79 shipping and handling. DC residents must add 5.75% sales tax).**

In child-centered education programs, children construct their own knowledge from their experiences and interactions with the world around them, and caregivers foster children's growth and development by building on children's interests, needs, and strengths within a safe and caring environment. The Step by Step educational partnership developed a series of child-centered teaching manuals for caregivers and teachers in early childhood programs in Central and Eastern Europe. The series was initially intended for preschool but has been extended to include children from birth to age 10. Fourth in that series, this manual offers caregivers (birth to age 3) practical advice on how to: (1) support infants' and toddlers' emotional, social, cognitive, language, and physical development; (2) recognize and respond to each child's temperament and interests; (3) create an environment that is safe, healthy, and stimulating; and (4) work with families and other professionals to ensure a quality program. The manual's contents are: (1) "Part 1: Introduction," including program rationale and philosophy; (2) "Part 2: The Research Base for the Methodology," including infant and toddler development, and infants and toddlers in their families and communities; (3) "Part 3: How Infants and Toddlers Learn," including supporting emotional development; guiding social development; guiding cognitive development; guiding early language development; guiding physical development; using daily routines as learning experiences; observing, recording, and reporting on children's development; and families and caregivers together supporting infants and toddlers; (4) "Part 4: The Environment for Learning," including ensuring a healthy environment, ensuring a safe environment, promoting good nutrition, and physical space--designing responsive environments for infants and toddlers; and (5) "Part 5: Program Staffing and Evaluation." (Contains approximately 120 references.) PS02644

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4. Szanton, Eleanor Stokes, Ed.(1997) ***Creating Child-Centered Programs for Infants and Toddlers: Birth-3 Year Olds. Step By Step: A Program for Children and Families.*** **Children's Resources International, Inc., 2262 Hall Place, N.W., Suite 205, Washington, DC 20007; phone: 800-625-2448; 202-625-2508; fax: 202-625-2509; e-mail: CRINC@AOL.COM ($39.95, plus $4.79 shipping and handling. DC residents must add 5.75% sales tax).**

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5. Bickart, Toni S.; Dodge, Diane Trister; Jablon, Judy R. (1997). ***What Every Parent Needs To Know about 1st, 2nd and 3rd Grades: An Essential Guide to Your Child's Education.*** **Teaching Strategies, Inc., P.O. Box 42243, Washington, DC 20015; Telephone: 800-637-3652; Fax: 202-364-7273; Email: TSI7543@aol.com ($12.95).**

The early elementary grades are a crucial stage in a child's life when important academic skills are learned. Noting the important role parents play in their child's academic success, this book offers parents guidance in supporting their child's education in the primary grades. The book's chapters are: (1) "Learning in the Early Grades," including questions parents ask, what 6- to 8-year-old children are like, principles that make learning effective, why schools need to be different today, what to look for (a parent's checklist), and how to get involved; (2) "The Best Classroom for Your Child," exploring the classroom as a workplace and the classroom as a community; (3) "How Children Become Readers," including phonics and whole language; (4) "How Children Become Writers"; (5) "How Children Become Mathematical Thinkers"; (6) "How Children Learn Social Studies"; (7) "How Children Become Scientific Thinkers"; (8) "How Children's Learning is Assessed," including purposes and effective approaches of assessment; and (9) "Helping with Homework." The book includes a glossary and sections on developmental characteristics of first-, second-, and third-graders and on learning disabilities, special needs, and inclusion. (Contains a resources list (including World Wide Web sites) and 30 references.) PS026347

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6. Robinson, Grace. (1998). ***Older Child Adoption.*** **Crossroad Publishing Company, 370 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017; Telephone: 212-532-3650; Fax: 212-532-4922; Email: sales@crossroadpublishing.com ($17.95).**

Based on interviews with 30 families who adopted children over the age of 2, this book provides prospective and current adoptive parents with insight into the seemingly irrational behavior of the older adopted child, providing coping models and questioning the policies governing the services provided to such children and their families. The first part of the book focuses on the various unresolved feelings older adopted children experience and how parents must manage this challenge without taking the child's behavior "personally." The chapters in this part are: (1) "The Traumatized Child"; (2) "The Grieving Child"; (3) "The Child with More than One Mother"; (4) "The Attachment Disordered Child"; (5) "The Sexually Abused Child"; and (6) "The Child with Provocative Behavior." The second part of the book deals with how adoption, particularly of older children, takes the definition of nuclear and extended family far beyond blood or resemblance, stretches the capacity of a community to provide services, and requires a commitment that transcends feeling and expectation. Chapters in this section are: (7) "A Family that is Different"; (8) "A Family that Needs Services"; and (9) "A Family that Transcends Expectations." The book concludes with a glossary, a 31-item bibliography, and a brief listing of national resources for adoption. PS026422

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7. Borcherdt, Bill. (1996). ***Making Families Work and What to Do When They Don't: Thirty Guides for Imperfect Parents of Imperfect Children.*** **Haworth Press, Inc., 10 Alice St., Binghamton, NY 13904-1580; Telephone: 607-722-5857; Fax: 607-722-6362; Email: getinfo@haworth.com ($19.95).**

Taking a sometimes unconventional view of parent-child and family matters, this book contends that the facts of family living do matter--but not to the all-or-nothing degree advocated by some experts. The book disputes many well-established beliefs about the importance of family life and maintains that as the sacredness of family relationships is decreased, pressures are relieved. The chapters highlight domestic matters in the form of misunderstandings that interfere with family relationships and what can be done to better cope with such difficulties. The chapters are: (1) "Forty-One Irrational Beliefs of Family Living, with Rational Counters and Commentary"; (2) "Examining Your Child's AQ (Appreciation Quotient)"; (3) "The Role Model Fallacy"; (4) "When and Why It's Better for Family Communication to Draw a Blank"; (5) "The Mistake of Linking Favorable Regard for Your Child to Human Worth"; (6) "Never Deprive a Child of the Right to Go Without"; (7) "When Children Double Bind Their Parents"; (8) "Fifteen Unmannerly Actions that Represent Responsible Parenting"; (9) "Minding Less when Your Child Doesn't Mind"; (10) "The Merits of Extracting Emotional Dependency from the Parental Equation"; (11) "With Kids Like That, You Don't Need Enemies"; (12) "Guaranteeing Your Child Opportunity without a Guarantee of Success"; (13) "Why Treat Children the Same when They Are All Different?"; (14) "Aspire and Inspire: Do It Yourself, Hire Someone Else to Do It, Forbid Your Child to Do It"; (15) "Implications of Fraudulently Living Your Life through Your Child"; (16) "Doing 'To' the Child vs. Failing to Accept What Can't Be Done 'For' the Child"; (17) "Is Behavior Gone Unnoticed Really Less Likely To Occur?"; (18) "Nature vs. Nurture in Children"; (19) "Loyalty, Love, Obligation, and (Dis)Agreement in Family Relationships"; (20) "Have a Sense of Humor in Proportion to What Ails You as a Parent"; (21) "Questioning the Advisability of Unconditional Parental Love"; (22) "Thirty-Four Guidelines for Effective and Efficient Parenting"; (23) "The Ugly Duckling Syndrome"; (24) "When Baby Makes Three: Children as an Intrusion"; (25) "Being Able to Order Parents on a Silver Platter"; (26) "Learning Manners from Those Who Have Few"; (27) "Working Yourself Out of a Job While Retaining Its Joys"; (28) "Protecting Yourself from the Oppositional-Acting Child"; (29) "The Only Golden Rule of Parenting"; and (30) "Wiles of My Own Parenting to Date." PS026384

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8. Freeman, Carol Goldberg. (1996). ***Living with a Work in Progress: A Parents' Guide to Surviving Adolescence.*** **National Middle School Association, 2600 Corporate Exchange Dr., Suite 370, Columbus, OH 43231; Telephone: 800-528-NMSA (NMSA Stock No. 1237).**

This book is a collection of essays on all of the common problems, experiences, and humorous anecdotes of adolescence, written for the purpose of altering the common negative perception of adolescence and instilling a feeling of celebration of this period of tremendous change in children's lives. Following an introductory section, the second section of the book, "Uncommon Traits," discusses privacy issues, mother and daughter relationships, limits, and eating disorders. The third section, "Friendship," explores choosing friends, rejection, new friends, wanting to belong, jealousy, and "telephonitis." The fourth section, "Schoolwork," looks at respect, adjusting to school, the report card, and stress. The fifth section, "Boyfriends & Girlfriends," discusses being pursued, being in love, and saying no. The sixth section, "Beyond Academics," explores spring sports, fear of failure, networking, gender-stereotyping, and dealing with grief and loss. The seventh section, "Togetherness," discusses feeling needed, surprises, snow days, and the annual Christmas letter. The eighth section, "Letting Go," discusses summer camp, the graduation dress, and a time of self-discovery. The final section provides a brief, humorous summary of the period of adolescence. PS026357

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Parent News for July 1998

Resources for Parents

Organizations

The Bureau for At-Risk Youth

The Bureau for At-Risk Youth is an educational publisher and distributor of programs, videos, publications, and products for youth at-risk and their caregivers. Started in 1990, the Bureau has quickly become a leading supplier of innovative, high-quality, user-friendly resources that help children, teens, parents, educators, and others cope with the many vital issues facing today's youth. Areas of concern and publishing activity include substance abuse, teenage sexuality and pregnancy, violence prevention, conflict resolution, child abuse, self-esteem, and much more.

The Bureau for At-Risk Youth has developed and published over 1,000 booklets, videos, and products that have received wide acclaim and acceptance in the educational guidance community. The company has in-house editorial, desktop publishing, marketing, and product development departments.

Contact:

The Bureau for At-Risk Youth
135 Dupont St.
P.O. Box 760
Plainview, NY 11803-0760
Telephone: 800-99-YOUTH (800-999-6884)
Fax: 516-349-5521
Email: info@at-risk.com

Family Education Network

Founded in 1990, the Family Education Network aims to help parents get more involved in their children's education--and in turn, help their children succeed both in school and in life. The network is a non-partisan organization, dedicated to providing parents unbiased, practical information through publications like "Education Today" and through the use of Email and the Internet. It provides a combination of news, resources, information exchange, legislative tracking, health resources, and other educational tools.

Contact:

Family Education Network
20 Park Plaza, Suite 1215
Boston, MA 02116

Telephone: 617-542-6500
Fax: 617-542-6564
Email: support@familyeducation.com
Internet: http://www.familyeducation.com

National Association for Neighborhood Schools, Inc.

The National Association for Neighborhood Schools works to end busing of students based on race. Its mission is to end race-based student assignments to public schools, allowing students instead to attend their neighborhood schools.

Contact:

The National Association for Neighborhood Schools, Inc.
3905 Muriel Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44109
Telephone: 216-398-4667
Fax: 302-892-9538
Email: rhaws@aol.com
Internet: http://www.nans.org/

National Community Education Association

The NCEA's purpose is to promote parent and community involvement in public education; form community partnerships to address community needs; and expand lifelong learning opportunities for community residents of all ages and educational backgrounds. The association provides membership services including training through workshops and conferences; technical assistance to state associations and local school districts; a monthly newsletter and a quarterly journal; and governmental and public relations services.

Contact:

National Community Education Association
3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91
Fairfax, VA 22030
Telephone: 703-359-8973
Fax: 703-359-0972
Email: ncea@ncea.com
Internet: http://www.idsonline.com/ncea/

National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

The National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1990 dedicated to eliminating birth defects caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy and improving the quality of life for those individuals and families affected. NOFAS piloted many of its programs in Native American communities and continues to take a multicultural approach to prevention and healing in communities nationwide. NOFAS maintains a national information clearinghouse focusing solely on FAS/FAE, providing information, resources, and referrals to thousands of requests each year through an 800 number. NOFAS publishes a free quarterly newsletter "Notes From NOFAS" providing the latest news on FAS and NOFAS.

Contact:

National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
1819 H St. NW, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20006
Telephone: 202-785-4585
Fax: 202-466-6456
Email: nofas@erols.com

The Parent Network for the Post-Institutionalized Child

The Parent Network for the Post-Institutionalized Child was created in 1993 to connect families throughout the United States and Canada who have children who came from the maternity hospitals, orphanages, and institutions for the irrecuperable or "street children" of economically-deprived countries. Some of these children are exhibiting a variety of problems, such as emotional and psychological disturbances, developmental delays and learning disabilities, and medical problems. To provide support to members, the organization publishes a newsletter "The Post" which contains ideas related to the particular needs of post-institutionalized children and responds to requests of subscribers for information on a particular topic.

Contact:

The Parent Network for the Post-Institutionalized Child
P.O. Box 613
Meadow Lands, PA 15347
Telephone: 724-222-1766
Fax: 724-979-3140
Email: info@pnpic.org

Parents for Public Schools

The Parent Network for the Post-Institutionalized Child was created in 1993 to connect Parents for Public Schools (PPs) is a national organization of grassroots chapters dedicated to recruiting students, involving parents, and improving public schools. PPs mobilizes parents to build better public schools and communities. Founded in 1991 in Jackson, MS, Parents for Public Schools has 53 chapters across 20 states.

Contact:

Parents for Public Schools
P.O. Box 12807
Jackson, MS 39236-2807
Telephone: 800-222-1222 or 601-982-1222
Fax: 601-982-0002
Email: PPSChapter@aol.com

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Newsletters/Magazines

PEPTALK: Parenting, Education, Practitioners Talk

This newsletter, published quarterly, is designed to provide parent support and education practitioners with information and ideas. A recent issue includes a discussion on the value of accessible parenting education, an article on the issue of nature vs. nurture and specific strategies that will help parents identify their child's temperament, and research nuggets and book reviews.

For more information:

Parenting Press
P.O. Box 75267
Seattle, WA 98125
Telephone: 206-364-2900
Fax: 206-364-0702
Email: office@parentingpress.com

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Resources for Parents

NETWorking: Web Sites to Visit

Name: Children's Defense Fund

Description: The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) is a private nonprofit organization focused on educating the nation about the needs of children and encouraging preventative investment in children before they become ill, drop out of school, or get into trouble. The Internet site offers a variety of publications, reports, and data on children's health and safety, welfare reform, and child care.

Address: http://www.childrensdefense.org

Name: National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice

Description: The National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice provides technical assistance, staff training, research, and information on family-based programs and issues to public and private human services agencies in states, counties, and communities across the United States. The Center has worked in child welfare, mental health, juvenile justice, community action, county extension, Head Start, and job training programs. The site offers a variety of resources including bibliographies, online publications, Internet links, and a description of services.

Address: http://www.uiowa.edu/~nrcfcp/new/index.html

Name: BabyCenter

Description: BabyCenter is a reference center of information focused on pregnancy and infancy. It contains resource lists from preconception through infancy, a glossary of terms, links to other Internet sites, and product guides (including product recalls).

Address: http://www.babycenter.com/

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Resources for Parents

Conference Calendar

Note: Only new conferences not previously listed in Parent News are included in this issue. For a full listing of conferences, workshops, and other parenting-related events, go to the PARENTING Calendar section of NPIN.

Conference: Program Evaluation and Family Violence Research: An International Conference

Sponsor: The Family Research Laboratory, University of New Hampshire

Date: July 26-29, 1998

Place: Durham, New Hampshire

Description: In its continuing series of international conferences on family violence research, the Family Research Laboratory invites participants to a conference with a special focus on program evaluation research. In recent years, as the family violence research field has grown and matured, an increasing number of investigators have devoted themselves to looking at prevention and intervention programs. This conference is intended to be a forum to exchange findings and innovations regarding such program evaluations and to help improve the general quality of the work.

Contact:

Kelly Foster, Conference Secretary
Family Research Laboratory
University of New Hampshire
126 Horton Social Science Center
Durham, NH 03824
Telephone: 603-862-1888
Fax: 603-862-1122
Email: khf@hopper.unh.edu
Internet:http://www.unh.edu/frl/conf98.htm

Conference: Second Annual Child Care Administrative Training Conference: Focus on Working with Parents

Sponsor: University of North Texas Center for Parent Education; First Texas Council of Camp Fire Child Care Training Conference; Eastfield College Child Care Training Conference

Date: July 31, 1998

Place: University of North Texas-Matthews Hall, Denton, Texas

Description: The theme of the second annual Child Care Administrative Training Conference is "The Changing Profile of the Child Care Parent." Topics to be discussed include: parent communication, legal and liability problems, custody issues, and multicultural topics. In addition, there will be a working lunch with discussion on dealing with welfare-to-work parents.

Contact:

Center for Parent Education
P.O. Box 311337 UNT
Denton, TX 76203-1337
Telephone: 940-369-7246
Fax: 940-565-4425
Internet: http://www.coe.unt.edu/auxill/cpt/conf.htm#sacc

Conference: Protect Your Students—Be Prepared for Crisis

Sponsor: National Association of Secondary School Principals

Date: August 4, 1998

Description: This satellite broadcast conference will address concerns about school safety in light of recent tragic events. Educators from across the nation will offer suggestions for identifying signs of trouble, exploring prevention/intervention strategies and programs, and learning to respond appropriately in crisis situations.

Contact:

National Association of Secondary School Principals
Telephone: 800-253-7746
Fax: 888-66-NASSP

Conference: Using Brain Research to Make a Difference for Children in the South

Sponsor: Southern Early Childhood Association's Public Policy Institute

Date: August 6, 1998

Place: Wyndham Greenspoint Hotel, Houston, Texas

Description: This preconference session will focus on the use of brain research for impacting children's lives, particularly in the South. It is part of the Second Annual Training the Early Childhood Trainer Conference of the Southern Early Childhood Association.

Contact:

Southern Early Childhood Association
Telephone: 800-305-7322
Fax: 501-663-2144
Email: seca@aristotle.net

Conference: The Character Education Partnership 5th Annual Forum: Character Education: Connecting the Pieces

Sponsor: Character Education Partnership

Date: October 22-24, 1998

Place: Renaissance Denver Hotel, Denver, Colorado

Description: Character education is part of the whole school and community, but how does it all fit together? This Forum will focus on investigating how participants can connect the pieces through school culture and student participation, community involvement, curriculum infusion, and assessing the results.

Contact:

Character Education Partnership
Telephone: 800-988-8081
Fax: 202-296-7779
Email: cepforum@character.org
Internet: http://www.character.org/forum/

Conference: Emotional Health of Young Children

Sponsor: North Shore Child and Family Guidance Center

Date: October 28, 1998

Place: Long Island Marriott Hotel, Uniondale, New York

Description: The North Shore Child and Family Guidance Center will sponsor a conference on the Emotional Health of Young Children.

Contact:

Sandy Wolkoff, CWS

North Shore Child and Family Guidance Center
Telephone: 516-626-1971
Fax: 516-626-8043

Conference: Forty-fifth Annual Convention of the National Association for Gifted Children

Date: November 11-15, 1998

Place: Commonwealth Convention Center, Hyatt Regency/The Seelbach/Galt House Hotels, Louisville, Kentucky

Description: The theme of the 45th Annual Convention of the National Association for Gifted Children is "Accepting the Challenge: Developing Talent." This conference is an opportunity for teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, and parents to learn how to meet the needs of gifted children in all settings and use new techniques to challenge all children to reach their full potential.

Contact:

NAGC Membership
1707 L St. NW, Suite 550
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-785-4268
Internet: http://www.nagc.org/ConvInfo/Louis/cover.htm

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NPIN

National Parent Information Network

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    - Parent Involvement from Teacher and Student Perspectives
    - Teens, Sleep, and School
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Parent News Editorial Information

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Production Editor: Emily S. Van Hyning

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Parent News for August 1998

What's New on NPIN

For a listing and description of items that are new on NPIN over the last three months, see the What's New on NPIN section on the NPIN Home Page.

What's New: Resources added to NPIN during July 1998

Reviews or summaries of the following parenting-related books were added to the Parenting Resources: Books section of NPIN:

- *Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect through Parent Education,* by Dickon N. Reppucci, Preston A. Britner, and Jennifer L. Woolard. 1997.
- *Robbed of Humanity: Lives of Guatemalan Street Children,* by Nancy Leigh Tierney. 1997.
- *Creating Child-Centered Classrooms: 3-5 Year Olds. Step By Step: A Program for Children and Families,* by Pamela A. Coughlin, Kristen A. Hansen, Dinah Heller, Roxane K. Kaufmann, Judith Rothschild Stolberg, Kate Burke Walsh. 1997.
- *What Every Parent Needs To Know about 1st, 2nd and 3rd Grades: An Essential Guide to Your Child's Education,* by Toni S. Bickart, Diane Trister Dodge, and Judy R. Jablon. 1997.
- *Older Child Adoption,* by Grace Robinson. 1998.
- *Making Families Work and What to Do When They Don't: Thirty Guides for Imperfect Parents of Imperfect Children,* by Bill Borcherdt. 1996.
- *Living with a Work in Progress: A Parents' Guide to Surviving Adolescence,* by Carol Goldberg Freeman. 1996.

Information on the following parenting-related organizations was added to the Resources for Those Who Work with Parents: Organizations section of NPIN:

- The Bureau for At-Risk Youth
- Family Education Network
- The National Association for Neighborhood Schools, Inc.
- National Community Education Association
- National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- The Parent Network for the Post-Institutionalized Child
- Parents for Public Schools

Information on the following parenting-related newsletters was added to the Parenting Resources: Newsletters section of NPIN:

- PEPTALK: Parenting, Education, Practitioners Talk

Several new links to Internet resources were added in the Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents section.

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August's Feature

Six Recommendations to Consider when Choosing an Advocate for Your Special Needs Child

by Sidra M. Rothman and Michaelene M. Ostrosky

About the Authors

Sidra Rothman received her master of science in education from the University of Illinois in 1996. She currently works as an early childhood special education teacher at Parkman Elementary School in Chicago.

Michaelene M. Ostrosky is an Associate Professor of early childhood special education in the Department of Special Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She conducts research on children's transitions between early childhood settings, and communication and social interventions for young children with disabilities.

When Aja (not her real name), a 5-year-old girl with identified special needs, was preparing to begin kindergarten, her parents found that having their daughter included within a regular kindergarten classroom was met with tremendous resistance by the local school representatives. "We wanted Aja to attend a regular kindergarten classroom, but the school district told us that if she was included in a regular classroom, she would be taking the place of a 'regular' child. They said that Aja had other placement options, but the 'regular' children had only one classroom option."

Parents of a child with special needs may experience difficulties surrounding their child's education. These difficulties might revolve around having the child included in a regular education classroom, receiving needed services for the child, confusion regarding the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP), or feeling unable to maneuver within the school system. When these problems or difficulties arise, parents may not know who or where to turn for help and support.

Enlisting the assistance of an advocate is one option that parents might consider. An advocate is anyone acting on the behalf of another person. An advocate can be an attorney, a personal friend, a family member, a classroom teacher, a service provider (i.e., physical therapist, speech language pathologist), or a spiritual advisor. Advocates may be located through parent organizations, social service agencies, church groups, or service providers. For example, an advocate might be referred to a family by clergy, child care providers, pediatricians, or other parents. A family might invite the child's preschool teacher to attend an IEP meeting when transitioning the child into kindergarten, so that the teacher might share strategies that she found successful when working with the child.

As part of a recent study completed at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, twenty parents who had used an advocate for their preschool children with special needs were interviewed about their experiences with an advocate, and were asked to provide recommendations for parents who might be considering using an advocate in the future. Recommendations centered around six main themes which will be discussed here.

Establish expectations, roles, and responsibilities early in the relationship.

The advocacy relationship can be a very positive and beneficial one if both the family and the advocate are aware of what is expected of each member of the parent-advocate team. An advocate might help prepare the family on what to ask for, or expect, at their meetings with school personnel. Additionally, an advocate can be an incredible source of support and encouragement to the family. As one interviewee pointed out about her advocate, "If we hadn't had this person, I don't know where [my daughter's] education would be right now. But she has given us more support than anybody that we've worked with."

Several parents also mentioned that an advocate can serve as a neutral third party during meetings with the school. This role might involve the advocate observing the body language and climate of the room, being aware of informal and indirect communication that might occur, and helping the group maintain a focus on child goals.

Find an advocate with relevant knowledge, resources, and contacts.

While there are many aspects of enrollment in a school system and of parenting a child with special needs that parents describe as being positive, there are some aspects that may be frustrating or difficult. One study participant recommended that families find an advocate who is knowledgeable about resources and contacts in the community. "You definitely need someone who has lots and lots of contacts. So if they don't know the answer they can find an answer or find an option. . . [and] bring in other people for your district to talk to."

An advocate can provide a "window" to the educational world, a translator through whom parents can relate their needs and questions to educators. A second parent who commented on the importance of specific advocate skills said, "I think. . . the best thing that came out of [the advocacy experience] was that she [the advocate] was familiar with the legal side of things, and unless you're involved in that particular world of special education. . . the first experience you're pretty much blind." Advocates can help steer parents in the right direction when the path appears complicated or cluttered.

Find an advocate with whom you feel comfortable and with whom you can communicate.

It is important for the advocate to be aware of the needs of the child and family, and to be conscious of the fact that these needs, concerns, and priorities may be in a state of continual change as the child develops and as the family learns more about programs and supports available for individuals with special needs. Understanding that every child is different, and his or her educational needs vary accordingly, will enable the advocate to plan his or her advocacy strategies according to the priorities and needs of the child and family. At times, events may be stressful and emotionally laden, so it is important that the parent feel comfortable with the advocate and that lines of communication are open. According to one parent who was interviewed about her advocacy experience, the advocate provided a sounding board upon which the parent could work through questions or issues. The parent commented, "I could just be real open and question things, and know that I wasn't being judged. I could question decisions or different things, and not feel that someone was going to criticize me." It is important that families find an advocate who is a good match for both the child and the family.

Use the advocate to improve one's ability to self-advocate for child and family needs.

Almost all of the parents reported that having an advocate increased their knowledge of special education and school policies, and enabled them to become advocates for their own children. One parent stated, "I think a good advocate will also be empowering the parent, so that the advocate, as much as possible, can let the parents speak for themselves. It's real easy to turn that responsibility over to someone else, but unless they're guaranteed to be there forever, they're not going to be as. . . effective an advocate as the parent will. . . over the years."

Parents should not be afraid to voice their concerns to professionals on behalf of their family and their children. One parent reported, "Nobody knows their child better than the parent does, and they may have a long [degree] behind their name. . . but they don't live with that child day in and day out, they don't get up with that child at night, they don't experience life with that child like that parent does." Parents are the constant in their children's lives; therefore, skills in advocating for their children will likely grow during interactions with a variety of educational, vocational, and recreational professionals across the child's life span.

Use an advocate early in your child's education, and during transitions, to obtain the best results and avoid problems in the future.

Having an extra set of eyes and ears early on in the process may help parents sort out all of the verbal and nonverbal information that is shared during initial meetings focusing on their child with special needs. One parent in the study recommended, "I encourage it [using an advocate] from the very first meeting, because you lose out on a lot of stuff for your kid if you don't. You don't find out about a lot of things. You don't know about things that you can ask for." Clarifying points of confusion immediately will help parents and professionals avoid problems in the future.

Some parents observed that they received more respect and consideration from school personnel due to their using an advocate. As one parent pointed out, "When I go in and ask for something or question something, they take the time to. . . respond to me and listen to me. I think when a parent walks in with an advocate they [school personnel] know that the parent means. . . a little more business than just sitting there and going through the motions with the school district."

Maintain contact with other parents of children with special needs, and become aware of resources in the community.

Other parents can serve as invaluable resources, especially those parents who have already experienced similar situations with their child and with the school system. Aja's mother recommended, "Keep in touch with other families of handicapped kids. Find out what they're going through, they may have information, they may know somebody that really stands up and fights for their kid." Families may be able to support one another emotionally, share information on current techniques and equipment for children with special needs, and answer questions or address concerns in a manner that is different from the support that professionals can offer.

One parent in the study mentioned, "I wish that it was more well known that there's such a thing [as advocacy] available, because we did not know that and we struggled for quite some time." It appears that advocacy is not well known to parents as an option for their child's education, and that advocacy typically is not very accessible to parents. It is important that families of children with special needs and families whose children are at-risk for academic failure become aware of family and child legal rights within the educational system, and learn about those organizations and individuals within their community that can help protect these rights and provide support to the family. These organizations include the Association for Retarded Citizens (the Arc), the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the March of Dimes, the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS), special education departments of local universities, as well as the American Bar Association (ABA).

Aja's family reported that they will maintain contact with their advocate in the future, and will continue to enlist this advocate's assistance in working with the school system to ensure the best possible education for Aja. The advocacy experience can be very positive and beneficial, and it also can be a learning experience for all participants. The recommendations listed above can greatly enhance the advocacy experience, assist in the acquisition of needed child and family services, and create a lasting relationship that could enhance the well-being of both the family and the child.

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Community Spotlight

America Goes Back to School: Creating Parent–Community–School Partnerships

by Anne S. Robertson

Although much has been written about the value of parent participation in schools and creating effective community-school partnerships, many parents and teachers still wonder what this means for their child or school community. What might be expected of the parents regarding activities, responsibilities, and volunteer time? What is expected of the teacher or the principal? Is the school staff still "in charge" of the classroom and school operations, or does their responsibility diminish with increased parent-community involvement? How do children respond to having increased parent participation? What does a school with active parent participation look like?

While the research supporting the benefits of parent, family, and community involvement in schools is overwhelmingly positive (Hendersen & Berla, 1995), it is often difficult for parents and school staff to visualize how their school might change, what programs might be implemented, or how each individual might perform his or her role a little differently. In 1995, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, Richard W. Riley, launched the *America Goes Back to School* campaign to help all Americans identify ways that they can increase active parent participation and strengthen teaching and learning in local schools.

America Goes Back to School has now become an annual effort, and a growing number of schools are beginning to see the benefits of active parent and community partnerships. Secretary Riley and the Partnership for Family Involvement invites everyone to get involved in this year's initiative, particularly during the period of August through October. The 1998 challenge encourages parent and community participation in the following areas:

- leading efforts to modernize schools and reduce class size;
- teaching children how to avoid violence, drugs, alcohol, and tobacco;
- helping teachers and students obtain and use technology;
- spending time mentoring a child in mathematics;
- starting or expanding an after-school or summer reading program; and
- helping children prepare for college early.

The *America Goes Back to School* Web sitehttp://www.ed.gov/Family/agbts/ features a variety of examples of programs that have been implemented in local schools through the efforts of parents, businesses, colleges and universities, or local elected officials. For example, in Seattle, Washington at Lyndale Elementary School, parents and staff teamed to develop a computer lab for families that do not have home computer access. The lab is open in the late afternoon or evening hours so that parents and children can work together. Other local initiatives include:

- **Block parent meetings** at Buhrer Elementary School in Cleveland, Ohio, where teachers go off-campus to meet with parents in students' homes, or in a nearby library or community center.
- **Mentor Parents** were trained in Stockton, California and provided more than 5,000 hours of service by working as volunteers in the schools and helping improve family-school communication.
- **Read*Write*Now!** in Rockford, Illinois is a partnership between the Mayor's office, the Rockford public schools, and the city's public libraries. Students in grades 1 to 3 who are not reading at grade level are given a library card, paired with an adult tutor, encouraged to read daily, and tutored weekly.
- **Better Education is Everyone's Business** is taken to heart by the Hemmings Motor News of Bennington, Vermont. This business encourages its employees to schedule time off, with pay, to volunteer in local schools or at academic activities.

There are many other examples of programs and volunteer activities, but since each community is slightly different, programs should be tailored to serve local families and students. For more information about *America Goes Back to School* and to obtain your *Partners' Activity Kit* please contact:

The Partnership for Family Involvement in Education
Telephone: 800-USA-LEARN
Internet: http://www.ed.gov/Family/agbts/

Other related resources to assist with building school partnerships:

National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
330 N. Wabash Ave., Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60611-3690
Telephone: 312-670-6782
Internet: http://www.pta.org

Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships
Johns Hopkins University
3505 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
Telephone: 410-516-8800
Internet: http://scov.csos.jhu.edu/p2000

Institute for Responsive Education
Northeastern University
50 Nightingale Hall
Boston, MA 02115

Telephone: 617-373-2595
Internet: http://www.resp-ed.org/index.html

Sources

Davies, Don. (1997). Partners for student success. *Parent News* [Online]. Available: http://npin.org/pnews/pnew297/pnew297b.html [1997, February].

Henderson, Anne T., & Berla, Nancy. (1995). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement.* Washington, DC: Center for Law and Education.

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Parent News for August 1998

Of Interest

Separation Anxiety in Young Children

by Dawn Ramsburg

As a former infant and toddler teacher, I have witnessed on numerous mornings a young child, who was previously comfortable coming to day care, suddenly throwing a tantrum as the parent tries to leave, clinging to the parent's arm or leg as he or she tries to walk out the door. While this was distressing, I wondered what had happened the previous day to suddenly lead to such behavior. It was even more upsetting to the surprised parent as he or she was on their way to work.

Similar situations are frequently described by parents who submit questions through our AskERIC service, whether it is with a toddler who attends day care or with a 9-month-old who is going to stay at grandma's while mom and dad go out to dinner. As a parent or caregiver, it can be extremely difficult to resist a crying child who throws herself into your arms as you try to leave.

Such behaviors, while disturbing to the adults around them, are a sign that the child is reaching an important developmental milestone. At about 8 months of age, children will begin to become anxious, clinging, and easily frightened about unfamiliar people or objects (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1993). This phase is commonly called *separation* or *stranger anxiety*. Separation anxiety usually peaks between 10 and 18 months and then gradually fades during the last half of the second year.

Keep in mind, however, that these age ranges are only general guidelines. Because of individual differences in children's development, some children may never experience major episodes of separation anxiety while others may not display any of the behaviors associated with separation anxiety until the second year with the behaviors lasting until beyond the third birthday (Eisenberg, Murkoff, & Hathaway, 1994). In addition, separation anxiety can be more exaggerated for children who are experiencing other stresses in their life such as: moving, a new child care situation, the arrival of a new sibling, or relationship problems between the parents.

Why Do Children Have Separation Anxiety?

The child's unwillingness to leave a parent or caregiver is a sign that attachments have developed between the caregiver and child (Brazelton, 1992). The child is beginning to understand that each object (including people) in the environment is different and permanent (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1993). This means that your child is learning that there is only *one* of *you*. In addition, the child begins to understand that when he cannot see you, you have gone somewhere else, and he shows these anxious behaviors because he wants you to remain close to him.

Also, because young children cannot yet understand time, they do not know when or even if you will ever come back (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1993). As a result, a child may fuss and cry when you go into the next room, scream when you leave him with someone else, and may even refuse to go to sleep at night. Fortunately, as children get older, their memories will begin to provide comfort as they learn that you will come back. This is why it is important to keep your promise to return at a certain time (after nap or after snack time) so that they begin to build these memories of your return.

Nevertheless, it can be confusing to watch a toddler who is growing more independent everyday by putting on her own shoes or wanting to feed herself actually become more dependent with these emotional displays. It is important to remember that the child is working through a stage where she is struggling between feelings of striking out on her own and yet wanting to stay safe by your side (Eisenberg, Murkoff, & Hathaway, 1994).

How Can I Help My Child with Separation Anxiety?

Here are a few suggestions for easing separation anxiety.

- Because your child will be more susceptible to separation anxiety when tired, hungry, or sick, try to schedule departures after naps and mealtimes (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1993).
- Prepare your child before the separation occurs by reassuring him that you will return (Brazelton, 1992). Let him know when you will be back. Because your child cannot understand time, use concepts that he can understand such as "I'll be back when you are having snack," or "I'll be back on the day that you go to the library." Be sure to stick to that time or call if there is an emergency or something that will delay your return.
- Take the anxiety seriously and react with understanding, patience, and confidence ("I know you don't want me to leave, but I will be back after lunch") instead of by teasing ("Oh, you're so silly crying like that") or annoyance ("You make me feel so mad when you cry like that!") (Eisenberg, Murkoff, & Hathaway, 1994).
- Stay calm, matter-of-fact and, sympathetic. "I know you are upset that I have to go into the kitchen, but I need to cut up the carrots for dinner." Go into the kitchen with the child on your leg if necessary (Eisenberg, Murkoff, & Hathaway, 1994).
- Make your toddler feel secure when you're around by giving lots of love and attention. Young children will learn faster when they receive necessary attention and affection than by the parent's taking a "learn the hard way" attitude (Eisenberg, Murkoff, & Hathaway, 1994).
- "Practice" short-term separations around the house (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1993; Eisenberg, Murkoff, & Hathaway, 1994). As you go into the next room out of sight, talk to your baby: "Where did mommy go?" When you return, let her know: "Here I am!" These repeated separations can help your child learn that your disappearance is only temporary.
- Don't sneak away from your child (Eisenberg, Murkoff, & Hathaway, 1994). While tempting, this approach will only lead the child to be more guarded and resistant the next time you leave.
- Try to keep your own anxieties (difficulty in letting go, anxiety about the caregiver, guilt about leaving) under control. If your child senses or sees your distress at leaving, that will tell him that there must be something wrong (Eisenberg, Murkoff, & Hathaway, 1994).

Additional Resources

Bailey, Becky. (1992). "Mommy, don't leave me!" Helping toddlers and parents deal with separation. *Dimensions of Early Childhood, 20*(3), 25-27, 39.

Coping with Separation Anxiety from the National Parent Information Network
http://npin.org/respar/texts/chldcare/anxiety.html

Easing Separation Anxiety from the National Network for Child Care
http://www.nncc.org/Guidance/dc11_ease.transit.html

Separation: Ways to Ease the Pain of Everyday Losses from the North Dakota Cooperative Extension
http://www.ext.nodak.edu/extnews/pipeline/pp-11w.htm

So This Is Normal Too? Teachers and Parents Working Out Developmental Issues in Young Children by Deborah Hewitt. Published in 1995 by Redleaf Press.
http://npin.org/respar/books/hewitt95.html

Sources

American Academy of Pediatrics. (1993). *Caring for your baby and young child: Birth to age 5*. New York: Bantam Books.

Brazelton, T. Berry. (1992). *Touchpoints: Your child's emotional and behavioral development*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Eisenberg, Arlene, Murkoff, Heidi, & Hathaway, Sandee. (1994). *What to expect the toddler years*. New York: Workman Publishing.

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Parent News for August 1998

Of Interest

Resource List for Identifying Children's Developmental Milestones

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At the National Parent Information Network, through our Parents AskERIC service, we often receive questions on issues that relate to the developmental progress of children. Child development research has been able to identify periods in children's development when certain events can be expected to occur, such as taking first steps, saying first words, and rolling over. These events are called "developmental" milestones. In addition to these physical developments, children often display milestones in emotional development, such as beginning to express their independence during toddlerhood, and in social development, by forming peer relationships.

These milestones are important to be aware of, because they can help parents understand why their 2-year-old who has never acted this way before suddenly starts throwing tantrums and saying "No!" all the time. At the same time, being aware of the developmental progression can help parents monitor potential developmental delays (such as language delays) in their children which may require intervention services. However, it is important to keep in mind that because of individual differences in development, not all children will progress at the same rate or in the same way as other children their age. As a result, developmental milestones should be used only as a guide to children's development.

To provide you with more information on developmental milestones, we have compiled the following list of resources:

Newsletters

Parenting the First Year from the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Family Living Programs
http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/parenting/pfy.html

Parenting the Second and Third Years from the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Family Living Programs
http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/parenting/psty.html

These newsletters can also be ordered in print for $5.00 for each series. *Parenting the First Year* is also available in Spanish.

To order:
Cooperative Extension Publications
Rm. 170
630 West Mifflin St.
Madison, WI 53703

Telephone: 608-262-3346
Fax: 608-265-8052

Pampers Parent Pages E-mail Newsletter

This free weekly newsletter is customized to your baby's age, from your third trimester until your child turns 2-and-a-half. To subscribe go to the following Internet address:
http://www.pampers.com/parentpages/

Charts

Continuum of Development Chart for children ages 5-18 years from the Practical Parenting Partnerships ($5.00)
Telephone: 573-761-7761
Internet: http://www.pppctr.org/POSTER.JPG

Internet

I Am Your Child–Ages and Stages section
http://www.iamyourchild.org

ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families–Developmental Milestones section
http://www.zerotothree.org/parent.html

National Network for Child Care–Ages and Stages series
http://www.nncc.org/Child.Dev/age.stage.page.html

READY*SET*READ–Early Childhood Growth Chart
http://www.ed.gov/Family/GrowthChart/

Prepared for *Parent News* by Dawn Ramsburg.

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Of Interest

Parent Involvement from Teacher and Student Perspectives

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company released the *Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher: 1998* in May. This series of surveys has been conducted yearly since 1984, with the 1998 survey consisting of separate surveys for teachers and students. Specifically, public school teachers and students were surveyed on:

- Actual versus desired level of parental involvement in education
- Schools' role in encouraging parental involvement in education
- Parental involvement in school policy decisions
- At-home parental involvement in education
- Validity of criticisms commonly made by parents

For 1998, 1,306 students in grades 7-12 were surveyed using a self-administered questionnaire. Telephone interviews were conducted with 1,305 teachers who teach in middle schools, junior high schools, or high schools. The 1998 survey focused primarily on the various ways parents can be involved with their children's education. According to the findings reported in the *Executive Summary*, teachers and students are positive overall about the role that parents can and do play in supporting their public schools and their children's education. Specific findings from the report are summarized below.

Students' Perceptions

1. Most students (83%) report that their parents are at least somewhat involved with their education, and most (68%) would like them to remain as involved with their education as they currently are, but they do not want them to become more involved.
2. Students who earn grades below a C are less likely than others to say their parents are involved in their education and are less likely to say they would like their parents to be more involved in their education.
3. Most students (94%) feel that their parents encourage them to do well in school and that they provide them with the practical support necessary to succeed in school.
4. Students who are having trouble academically are less likely to feel that their parents are interested in their daily lives or in their aspirations for the future.

Teachers' Perceptions

1. Most teachers (83%) would like to see the level of parental involvement in their schools increase. These perceptions have not changed since teachers were first asked in 1987. Also, nearly all inner city teachers (95%) would like parents to be more involved.
2. Most teachers outside of urban schools give positive ratings to parent-teacher relations and are satisfied with the frequency of contact they have with their students' parents. Ninety-five percent of teachers in inner city schools feel that parent involvement is

lacking.

3. Overall, parents are perceived by teachers to be more readily available and responsive when contact is necessary than ten years ago (63%).
4. More teachers believe that parental involvement in education should occur both in the school and in the home than they did a decade ago.

Perceptions about Encouraging Parental Involvement

1. Teachers overall feel that their schools do a good job of encouraging parental involvement. Teachers working in urban schools feel their schools are doing a better job of encouraging parental involvement. Students tend to be more critical than teachers of their school's performance.
2. Teachers are more likely to favor a wider range of parental involvement in education than ten years ago, but they are split over how much say parents should have in policy decisions affecting the classroom. Fifty-three percent of teachers believe that parents should be kept informed rather than actively consulted about curriculum changes and fifty-five percent of teachers believe that parents should only be informed about homework policies. At the same time, three-fourths of students believe that parents should have some or a lot of input in decisions regarding curriculum and sixty percent believe parents should have input regarding homework assignments.
3. In spite of the findings regarding parental input about curriculum and homework, the majority of teachers are in favor of including parents on committees that oversee school policies. Eighty-seven percent of teachers feel that parents should serve on teams that set school policies.

Perceptions about Common Criticisms of Parents

1. The majority of teachers (54%) and students (67%) feel that parents take too little interest in their children's education. The most frequently cited obstacle that teachers believe students face when doing homework is uninvolved parents and lack of parental support (20%).
2. Fewer urban teachers than in 1987 are critical of the role that parents take with regard to their children's education.
3. Overall, most students felt that their parents are at least somewhat helpful when they are having problems with their school lives or their personal lives. Minority boys are the most likely to report that their parents are very helpful when they seek help with their schoolwork (60%).

The major findings from this survey are available online at:
http://www.metlife.org/Companyinfo/Community/Found/Docs/lifesurv.pdf

In addition, the entire survey is available by mail by writing to:

MetLife
The American Teacher Survey
P.O. Box 807
Madison Square Station
New York, NY 10159-0807

Additional Resources

On the Internet

Understanding Parent Involvement from a Parent's Perspective
http://npin.org/pnews/1998/pnew298/pnew298i.html

A Compact for Learning from the U.S. Department of Education's Partnership for Family Involvement in Education
http://www.ed.gov/PFIE/titlei.html

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education: Parent and Community Involvement
http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/library/parent.html

The National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE)
http://www.ncpie.org/start.shtml

National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
http://www.pta.org

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education
http://www.ed.gov/PFIE/index.html

Fathers' Involvement in Their Children's Schools
http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/fathers/index.html

Multicultural Parents and Families: How You Can Be Involved in Your Child's Education
http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/npin/pnews/pnewn96/pnewn96j.html

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Barber, R. Jerry, & Patin, Debra. (1997). Parent involvement: A two-way street. *Schools in the Middle, 6*(4), 31-33.

Hoover-Dempsey, Kathleen V., & Sandler, Howard M. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? *Review of Educational Research, 67*(1), 3-42.

Workman, Susan H., & Gage, Jim A. (1997). Family-school partnerships: A family strengths approach. *Young Children, 52*(4), 10-14.

Source

Louis Harris and Associates. (1997). *The Metropolitan life survey of the American teachers 1998*. New York: Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.

Prepared for *Parent News* by Dawn Ramsburg.

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Parent News for August 1998

Of Interest

Teens, Sleep, and School

Is your teenager getting enough sleep? Recently there have been several national news stories about teenagers and their physiological need for sleep. Teen drivers are involved in more sleep-related accidents than any other segment of the population, and research suggests that adolescents may be among the most sleep-deprived group in society.

Sleep researchers have conducted studies that suggest school classes should begin later in the morning to accommodate the teen's need for sleep. Based on this research, some U.S. schools have changed their school's start time. For example, based on a recommendation from the Minnesota Medical Association, several schools in Minnesota have established later start times (Sulack, 1997). In the 1997-1998 school year, administrators in Minneapolis, Minnesota established start times as follows: classes at the middle school level start at 9:40, and for high school, classes start at 8:30 (O'Conner, 1998). Administrators in other school districts around the country are being approached by doctors, parents, and educators to consider moving the school start time later in the morning (Fox, 1998).

This interest in delaying the start time for middle and high school students is based in part on the research of Dr. Mary Carskadon, a sleep researcher at Brown University. In April of 1997, Carskadon chaired an international symposium that focused on "Contemporary Perspectives on Adolescent Sleep." For years, Carskadon states, we have been going under the assumption that as children grow to adulthood, they need less sleep. Carskadon's research suggests that is not the case, and that a teenager's irregular sleep schedule (up late during the weeknights and sleeping in on weekends) contributes to the lack of restful sleep. As they enter puberty, teens experience a hormonal shift that affects their sleep patterns.

The Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement at the University of Minnesota conducted a research study on the later school start times implemented in Minnesota (http://carei.coled.umn.edu/SST/ssttext.htm#review). Their review of medical research on adolescent sleep lists the following key findings:

- As teenagers move through the teen years, they need increasing amounts of sleep.
- Teens need nine hours of sleep each night to avoid behaviors associated with sleep deprivation.
- Teen sleep deprivation is associated with information processing and memory deficits, increased irritability, anxiety, and depression, and decreased creativity and ability to handle complex tasks.
- 20% of all high school students fall asleep in school.
- Over half of students report being most alert after 3:00 in the afternoon.
- Additional weekend sleep does not offset the effects of sleep deprivation.
- The adolescent's circadian rhythm means he or she will feel awake later into the evening (through midnight) and unable to fall asleep. (Even if they go to bed at 9:30, they are not likely to fall asleep til after 11:00.)

While this is a new field of study, researchers are recommending parents consider the following tips to make sure their adolescents get enough sleep:

- Help them establish a regular, relaxing routine to unwind from the activities of the day. This signals to the body that it is time to prepare for sleep.
- Discourage them from reading books or watching television programs at bedtime that are violent, frightening, or controversial. This content can act as a stimulant that delays the onset of sleep.
- Discourage caffeine consumption in the afternoon and evening.
- Encourage regular exercise.
- Discourage naps.

Sources

Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement. *School start time study: final report summary* [Online]. Available: http://carei.coled.umn.edu/SST/ssttext.htm#review [1998, July 19].

Fox, Jonathan. (April 29, 1998). Newest public enemy: Not enough Z's for teens. *Education Daily 31*(82), pp. 1-4.

O'Connor, Anne. (1998). New start times find students awake, families frustrated. *Minneapolis Star Tribune* [Online]. Available: http://webserv1.startribune.com/cgi-bin/...Jul-98&word=school&word=times&word=start [1998, July 4].

Sulack, Karin. (March, 1997). Sleep deprivation induces later start times. *Crossroads Chronicle* [Online]. Available: http://www.blomington.k12.mn.us/indschool/TJ/croschrn/0397/NEWS/SLEEP.HTM [July 6, 1998].

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Of Interest

"Museums & Learning: A Guide for Family Visits."

Published by the Department of Education's Office of Educational Research & Improvement (OERI) & the Smithsonian's Office of Education. (April, 1998).

The Museum Visit: Making the Most of It

There is no magic formula for visiting museums. A spur-of-the-moment trip can be just as rewarding as a planned visit. But if you have the time, some things that you can do before, during, and after the visit may help to enrich the experience. Here are a few tips to help make your visit to any museum an enjoyable learning experience.

Before the Visit

Children may be more excited about the visit if they are involved in the planning. Ways to do this include:

- TALKING about what they will see in the museum, especially if it's the first visit. This conversation may include some basic information about museums, and also how objects get there and why people collect objects in the first place.
- FINDING OUT what excites them. If your youngsters are interested in meteors or mummies and your local museum has exhibits on these subjects, you're ready to go! If not, just choose a place that sounds interesting, such as a museum in a nearby city, or look for a museum online.
- RELATING what's being learned in school to a museum visit. Children can use the visit to do research or to find out more about a subject they're currently studying. Your local museum may have exhibits that will help bring the subject to life.
- REVIEWING personal safety and behavior rules. Make a safety plan with your children in case you get separated, including the role of museum guards and other staff. Talk with your children about how to behave in the museum by explaining that museums have rules of acceptable and unacceptable behavior. For example, art and history museums generally have a no-touching policy because the items displayed are rare and can't be replaced, but children's museums are always hands-on.

Things You Can Do before You Go

- Call or write for admission fees, hours, travel directions, and best times for family visits. Ask what days of the week and what hours are the least crowded. Some museums have free admission, while others ask for a small donation. Some have certain days that are free or have discounts for families, senior citizens, students, and children.
- Call or write for accommodations and services for visitors with special needs, including parking, entrances, and access to exhibit areas. Many museums recommend calling at least 2 weeks in advance for such services as sign language, oral, tactile, or cued-speech interpretation; captioning; or

publications in Braille or large print.
- Check newspapers, your local library, or bookstores for special exhibitions, events, or programs that may appeal to children. Libraries and bookstores often have books and free pamphlets that provide listings and descriptions of family activities that include regional museums.
- If you have access to the Internet, visit the Web site of the museum you plan to visit.

During the Visit

The Information Desk is a good "first stop" once you're at the museum. There you'll find floor plans with the location of exhibits, restaurants, restrooms, gift shops, elevators, wheelchair ramps, exits, as well as places to sit. Materials also are available in foreign languages. You might also ask about self-guided children's and family tour brochures, audio tours, gallery games and activity sheets, and family workshops and programs. Find out the times and locations for hands-on rooms, kids' performances, musical events, storytelling sessions, or museum tours. Next—

- BE FLEXIBLE and follow your child's lead. Don't be surprised if your planned visit to see the dinosaur bones is put on hold because the huge elephant has caught your children's attention. Let them enjoy the exhibit at their own pace. Be ready to discuss any questions they may have. If you don't know the answers, jot down the questions in a notebook.
- TRY TO RELATE FACTS about the exhibit that you're seeing to what your children already know. For example, a knight's suit of armor serves the same purpose as a catcher's mask, a bicycle helmet, or shin guards—to protect the body.
- ASK YOUR CHILDREN to tell you a story about an object in the exhibit that interests them. "Who do you think wore that suit of armor?" "How did they make it fit?" Encourage them to use their imaginations. If labels or wall text provide more information, include it in your discussion.

Play Museum & Gallery Games

Children of all ages love to play games. Museum games or treasure hunts focus a museum visit and help to break up the time as you go from exhibit to exhibit. They stimulate your child's curiosity, sharpen observation skills, and generally make the visit more enjoyable. If the museum does not provide games, make up your own.

- POSTCARD GAMES. Buy some postcards at the museum gift shop. Then turn your children into detectives and ask them to find the pictured items. Not only will they enjoy the hunt, but they'll be thrilled to discover the real thing. Were the colors the same? the details? the textures? the size? Later at home, the cards can be arranged for a home exhibition.
- I SPY. Have youngsters find an object in an exhibit and describe it to other family members so that each one can take a turn guessing what the object is: "I spy something red and brown with sharp edges," or "I spy something that inches its way along the ground."
- SEEK & FIND. Ask your child to find paintings that have his or her favorite colors, shapes, or objects in them. This game is not only fun but teaches children to look very closely at each object. Games like this give children a sense of accomplishment when they successfully find or identify everything asked of them.
- WHERE IS IT? Ask your child to find something in the exhibit that is very old… soft... hard... strong... shiny... Or something that feels rough... smooth... hot... slippery... bumpy... itchy... Or something that smells yummy... burnt... sweet...
- TELL ME WHY OR HOW? Begin the game by saying something like, "If I could ask one question, I'd ask: What are the steps in building an Indian tepee?" The answers are usually within the exhibit. This game is fun in any kind of museum.

Visit the Museum Gift Shop

Families are sure to find books, posters, toys, games, postcards, and other mementos that remind children of what they saw and expand their knowledge.

Child-Size Your Visit

Don't try to see everything in one visit. Young children, especially preschoolers and those in early grades, usually learn best in 10- to 15-minute sessions and can be overwhelmed by seeing too many things at one time. Thirty minutes to 1 hour may be the limit. Should your children say things like "I'm bored," "It's so hot in here," or "When are we going home?," you know that they've seen enough and it's time to take a break or leave. Plan another visit to see the exhibits you missed.

Electronic Resources

More and more virtual museums and field trips appear on the Internet every day. Many of the sites listed here have been recommended by museum professionals and librarians working with children. Note sites containing lesson plans for teachers.

Museums around the World
http://www.nma.gov.au/vlmp/world.html

Smithsonian Institution
http://www.si.edu/newstart.htm

World Wide Web Virtual Library Museum
http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/icom/Old/vlmp/

Art Museums

Art Institute of Chicago
http://www.artic.edu/

Art Museum Network
http://www.amn.org/

WebMuseum, Paris
http://sunsite.unc.edu/louvre/

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
http://www.metmuseum.org/htmlfile/education/edu.html

Children's Museums

Children's Museum of Indianapolis
http://www.a1.com/children/home.html

History

Illinois State Museum, At Home in the Heartland exhibit
http://www-exhibits.museum.state.il.us/exhibits/athome/

Liberty Bell Virtual Museum
http://nw3.nai.net/~spyder/

Library of Congress
http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/

Natural History

American Museum of Natural History, New York
http://www.amnh.org/

Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago
http://www.fmnh.org/

Science & Technology

Chicago Academy of Sciences
http://www.chias.org/

Exploratorium
http://www.exploratorium.edu/

Franklin Institute Science Museum
http://sln.fi.edu/

Miami Museum of Science
http://www.a1.com/children/home.html

Museum of Science & Industry, Chicago
http://www.msichicago.org/exhibit/exhome.html

Science Learning Network
http://www.sln.org/

Special Interest

The Firehouse Museum
http://www.globalinfo.com/noncomm/firehouse/Firehouse.HTML

National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum
http://www.baseballhalloffame.org/

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame & Museum
http://www.rockhall.com/

The White House
http://www.whitehouse.gov

Source

Museums & Learning: A guide for family visits [Online]. Available: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Museum/ [April, 1998].

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Parent News for August 1998

Of Interest

Children's Books

The ERIC system offers documents called "Information Guides" on a broad range of topics related to education. Of relevance to children's literature is an ERIC Info Guide called "Children's Literature" written by Sue A. Clary in 1994 (updated on November 15, 1995, by Twana Weiler). This online info guide contains links to many Web sites about children's literature. It is available online at:

http://ericir.syr.edu/cgi-bin/markup_infoguides/Alphabetical_List_of_InfoGuides/Children's_Lit-11.95

Below are children's books on the following topics: special needs children in the classroom, and separation anxiety.

Special Needs Children

Pay Attention, Slosh, by Mark Smith (illustrated by Gail Piazza) (Published in 1997 by Albert Whitman). Ages: 9-12.

Probably Still Nick Swansen: A Novel, by Virginia Euwer Wolff (Published in 1997 by Scholastic Paperbacks). Ages: Young adult.

Reach for the Moon, by Samantha Abeel, Charles R. Murphy, and Robert Williams (Published in 1994 by Pfeifer-Hamilton). Ages: 4-8.

What Do You Mean I Have a Learning Disability?, by Kathleen M. Dwyer (photographs by Barbara Beirne) (Published in 1991 by Walker & Co.). Ages: 4-8.

What's Wrong With Me?: Learning Disabilities at Home and School, by Regina Cicci (Published in 1995 by York Press). Ages: 12-18.

When Learning Is Tough: Kids Talk about Their Learning Disabilities, by Cynthia Roby (illustrated by Elena Dorfman) (Published in 1994 by Concept Books). Ages: 9-12.

Separation Anxiety–First Day of School

Franklin Goes to School, by Paulette Bourgeois (Published in 1995 by Scholastic Trade). Ages: 4-8.

Froggy Goes to School, by Jonathan London (Published in 1996 by Viking Children's Books). Ages: 4-8.

I'll Go to School If, by Bo Flood (Published in 1997 by Fairview Press). Ages: 4-8.

Parent News for August 1998

Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

Children in the States 1997. *(1997)*

This report from the Children's Defense Fund lists statistics on child and youth well-being for each of the states and the United States as a whole. Statistics are provided in the following categories: (1) children participating in federally subsidized programs (including Title 1 Education for the Disadvantaged, bilingual education programs, IDEA programs, Head Start, Supplemental Security Income, foster care, adoption assistance, Aid for Dependent Children, food stamps, and child support); (2) National School Lunch Program; (3) School Breakfast Program; (4) Women, Infants, and Children Food Program; and (5) Every day in. . . [specific state], which provides statistics on infant mortality, suicide, murder, deaths by guns, prenatal care, low birth weight, teenage mothers, unmarried mothers, abuse and neglect, and health insurance. PS026459 (Also see the report for 1998.)

CDF Publications
P.O. Box 90500
Washington, DC 20090-0500
Telephone: 202-628-8787
Fax: 202-628-8333
Internet: www.childrensdefense.org

Smith, Stephen J. (1998). *Risk and Our Pedagogical Relation to Children: On the Playground and Beyond.*

This book uses the playground as a reference point for a phenomenological examination of risk in children's lives and the development of a pedagogy of risk. Chapter 1 defines risk and discusses the use of anecdotes as a methodological device. Chapter 2 examines how considering risk as challenge and adventure leads to questions concerning adults' relationship to children and enabling children to take risks in relative safety. Chapter 3 examines adults' actions with children and the relationality of risk, while Chapter 4 focuses on helping children to take risks in relative safety through adult encouragement. Chapter 5 considers direct and indirect social challenges to take risks, distinguishes positive and negative challenges, and examines how the visibility of risk allows the construction of a pedagogy. Chapter 6 maintains that a pedagogy of risk rests upon acknowledging one's own ability to take risks and focuses on how working through apprehensiveness leads to reconciling adults' need to lend security to children's explorations with children's need to test the security of their world. Chapter 7 maintains that a child-oriented language of risk gives a fuller sense of the meaning of young children's physical activity than does the language of skill development, and discusses the importance of attending to the riskiness of children's activity over the course of successive playground encounters. Chapter 8 focuses on implications of the practice of risk and their application to other situations. Chapter 9 makes recommendations for implementing a pedagogical relation sensitive to risk. (Contains approximately 275 references.) PS026469

State University of New York Press
State University Plaza
Albany, NY 12246 ($19.95)

Christner, Anne Marshall, Ed. (1998). ***Measuring Outcomes in Children's Services.***

Outcomes evaluation can provide program managers and clinical directors in child welfare, juvenile justice, child mental health, and child protective services the necessary tools for program quality assurance and accountability. This guide describes the outcomes evaluation process and provides a summary of articles and reports detailing current findings and tools used in outcomes evaluation. Following the initial chapter on planning an outcomes system and the importance of cultural competence for designing evaluations, the guide is organized according to disorders or problem classification: (1) anxiety disorders; (2) attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, including behavioral interventions and pharmacotherapy; (3) autism; (4) depression and suicide, focusing on preventing depression, treatment strategies, and suicide prevention; (5) eating disorders; (6) conduct disorders; (7) miscellaneous disorders, including severe emotional disturbance; (8) risky behaviors, including running away, truancy, and risky sexual behavior; (9) substance abuse; (10) juvenile delinquency; and (11) child abuse and neglect. Two types of articles are included: digests of journal articles, and field reports from programs and consultants working on outcomes evaluation. Each article contains the full citation and editor's notes pointing out strengths and weaknesses of the approaches used in the outcomes evaluation studies. PS026514

Manisses Communications Group, Inc.
208 Governor St.
Providence, RI 02906
Telephone: 800-333-7771, 401-831-6020
Fax: 401-861-6370;
Internet: www.manisses.com ($75)

Why Should We Care about Child Care? ***[Video]. (1998)***

Produced as a touchstone for the White House Conference on Child Care, this brief video presents a collage of voices speaking on the need for quality child care. The voices include those of parents, physicians and child development experts, and child care workers. Among the threads touched upon by these voices are working mothers, the need for stimulus for early brain development, the relationships children form with caregivers, the effects of good child care and repercussions of poor care, affordability, the role of business in supporting child care, and the benefits of quality child care to the community. PS026521

Families and Work Institute
330 7th Ave., 14th Floor
New York, NY 10001
Telephone: 212-465-2044
Fax: 212-465-8637

(VHS video, $20)

Wang, Margaret C.; Haertel, Geneva D.; Walberg, Herbert J. (1998). ***Building Educational Resilience. Fastback 430.***

The media paint a bleak picture of the prospects for children and youth in many U.S. schools and communities. The number of children at risk of school failure because of poverty, illness, divorce, drug and alcohol abuse, frequent relocation, and other adverse circumstances is increasing. Although some teachers may feel as though these problems are beyond them, research points to educators' actions that can alleviate such problems by fostering educational resilience—the capacity of students to attain academic and social success in school despite exposure to personal and environmental adversities. To assist educators in fostering resilience, this "fastback," produced by the Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, describes the roles of teachers and other educators in promoting educational resilience, and shares heartening findings that many children demonstrate remarkable achievement despite conditions that put them at risk of failure. The fastback's contents are: (1) "Introduction"; (2) "When Schools Shortchange Children" (what we know about resilience; student diversity and poverty); (3) "Protective Factors that Promote Resilience" (family, peer group, community, school); (4) "Creating Classrooms that Foster Resilience" (teacher attitudes and expectations, instructional practices, classroom climate and organization, curriculum); (5) "Programs and Reforms that Build Resilience" (programs targeted to children at risk of school failure, comprehensive school reform versus narrower interventions, direct influences on student learning, meeting children's basic needs, students' sense of belonging, adapting curriculum and instruction); and (6) "Conclusion." An appendix lists educational programs with resilience-promoting features. (Contains 18 references.) PS026524

Phi Delta Kappa
408 North Union
P.O. Box 789
Bloomington, IN 47402-0789
Telephone: 812-339-1156

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Parent News for July 1998

Resources for Parents

Book Summaries and Reviews

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1. Holt, John. (1997). ***Teach Your Own: A Hopeful Path for Education (Third Edition).*** **Holt Associates, Inc., 2269 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02140; Telephone: 617-864-3100; Fax: 617-864-9235 ($16.95).**

Noting that children have a natural curiosity and urge to learn about the world around them, and that the nature of compulsory schooling is at odds with this inclination, this book explores why parents remove their children from schools to teach them at home and provides step-by-step guidance to that end. Following an introduction tracing the author's evolution, the chapters of the book are: (1) "Why Take Them Out?"; (2) "Common Objections to Home Schooling"; (3) "Politics of Unschooling"; (4) "Getting Them Out"; (5) "Home Schoolers at Work"; (6) "Living with Children"; (7) "Learning in the World"; (8) "Living and Working Space"; (9) "Serious Play"; (10) "Learning without Teaching"; (11) "Learning Difficulties"; (12) "Children and Work"; and (13) "School Response." Chapters include anecdotes from parents who are home-schooling and students who were schooled at home. PS026516

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2. Baker, Amy C.; Manfredi/Petitt, Lynn A. (1998). ***Circle of Love: Relationships between Parents, Providers, and Children in Family Child Care.*** **Redleaf Press, 450 North Syndicate, Suite 5, St. Paul, MN 55104-4125; Telephone: 800-423-8309, 612-641-0305; Fax: 800-641-0115 ($15.95).**

Children need loving bonds with caring adults to develop trusting relationships, solid self-esteem, and a readiness to learn. This book draws on caregivers' personal experience, as well as interviews and conversations and questionnaires completed by child care providers to explore the issue of love in child care settings and how family child care providers bond with children in their care and soothe parental fears that their own ties with their children will be weakened. Chapter 1 considers the nature of love for other people's children, including its role in high quality provider-child relationships, and risks and taboos associated with such bonds. Chapter 2 examines the formation of the parent-caregiver relationship, considers the role of traditional attitudes toward women, and describes characteristics of satisfying parent-provider relationships. Chapter 3 discusses special circumstances, such as working with parents of children with disabilities, and gives suggestions for dealing effectively with such circumstances. Chapter 4 looks at redesigning the traditional family circle, maintains that a deep caring relationship between parents and providers is an element of quality care, and examines benefits and problems when personal and professional lines become blurred. Chapter 5 examines how poor quality care teaches negative behavior patterns, damages self-esteem, and ultimately shapes society; and notes the importance of reexamining attachment in the child care setting, revising traditional child care models, and supporting provider-child bonds. Chapter 6 presents recommendations from providers, parents, and other sources for acknowledging the importance of love, including revising provider training, developing strategies to teach parents, and educating other professionals. (Contains 71 references). PS026520

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3. Hewlett, Sylvia Ann; West, Cornel. (1998). ***The War against Parents: What We Can Do for America's Beleaguered Moms and Dads.*** **Houghton Mifflin Company, 222 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116-3764; Telephone: 617-351-5000 ($24).**

The result of a unique collaboration between a black male and white female whose disparate backgrounds held numerous commonalities, this book examines the detrimental effects of the current market economy and negligent public policy on the well-being of American families. The first section of the book narrates the authors' working-class family backgrounds, highlighting the strength of their families and of the roles their parents played. The impact of government policies which helped sustain their strong family units is also examined. This section also highlights the current state of parenting and families, and how government, business, and the wider culture not only fail to support the efforts of parents and families, but actively undermine those efforts. The second section details the attacks on the family waged by these three entities. The third section explores the particularly detrimental results of these attacks on fathers—how the three entities have disabled fathers from fulfilling their role, and the influence of groups such as "Promise Keepers" and "Nation of Islam" in restoring the faith and self-determination men have been stripped of. The fourth section examines how to reweave the web of care in our nation, detailing a poll of parents' political priorities which showed remarkable continuity across race and socioeconomic class, and how far afield the priorities of politicians are from those of parents. This section also details a "Parents' Bill of Rights," a pragmatic, programmatic agenda to serve as a framework for a parents' movement, and devised by the Task Force on Parent Empowerment which the authors chaired. The book's appendices provide a detailed analysis of the parent survey as well as tables of relevant data. Extensive notes for each chapter are included. PS026522

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4. Wallander, Jan L., Ed.; Siegel, Lawrence J., Ed. (1995). ***Adolescent Health Problems: Behavioral Perspectives.*** **Guilford Publications, Inc., 72 Spring St., New York, NY 10012; Telephone: 800-365-7006, 212-431-9800; Fax: 212-966-6708; Email: staff@guilford.com ($35).**

The health-related problems of adolescents frequently are manifestations of social, economic, or behavioral factors. Many of the negative health outcomes and causes of mortality in adolescents are preventable. This book examines the relationship between adolescent risk-taking behaviors and health. Following an overview (Siegal), the chapters in the first section of the book explore general and conceptual issues: (1) "Epidemiology of Adolescent Health Disorders" (Holden and Nitz); (2) "Developmental Influences on Adolescent Health" (Sayer and others); (3) "Theoretical Models of Adolescent Risk-Taking Behavior" (Millstein and Igra); (4) "Legal Issues in Adolescent Health Care" (Weisz and Melton). Following an overview (Wallander), the chapters in the second section examine current research and clinical perspectives on health-risk and prevention behaviors: (5) "Adolescent Suicide Attempters in General Hospitals: Psychological Evaluation and Disposition Handling" (Spirito and others); (6) "Adolescents: The Leading Edge of the Next Wave of the HIV Epidemic" (DiLorenzo and Hein); (7) "Social-Psychological Antecedents and Consequences of Adolescent Tobacco Use" (Chassin and others); (8) "Coping and Competence in Adolescent Alcohol and Drug Use" (Wills and others); (9) "Health Promotion with Adolescents" (Kelder and others). Following an overview (Wallander), the chapters in the third section examine current research and clinical perspectives on chronic physical conditions: (10) "Appraisal, Coping, and Adjustment in Adolescents with a Physical Disability" (Wallander and Varni); (11) "Psychological Adjustment of Adolescents with Cystic Fibrosis or Sickle Cell Disease and Their Mothers" (Thompson and others); (12) "School-Based Treatment of Recurrent Headaches in Adolescents" (Larsson); (13) "Managing Insulin-Dependent Diabetes Mellitus in Adolescence: A Developmental

Perspective" (Johnson); and (14) "Family Adaptation to Diabetes: A Model for Intervention Research" (Wysocki and others). Each of the chapters contains references. PS026567

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Resources for Parents

Organizations

Best Friends Foundation

Established in 1987, the Best Friends Foundation is a non-profit organization that works with schools and community centers, providing an educational program to help adolescent girls gain self-respect, make positive decisions, and support each other in postponing sex and rejecting illegal drugs and alcohol use.

Contact:

Best Friends Foundation
2000 N Street NW, Suite 201
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-822-9266

Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center

The Frank Porter Graham (FPG) Child Development Center was established in 1966 as a multidisciplinary center dedicated to improving the lives of young children and their families through research, teaching, and service. The center focuses on children between the ages of birth and 8, and is housed at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The center publishes *Early Developments,* a newsletter, and maintains a Web site that contains information about their research projects.

Contact:

Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8185
Telephone: 919-966-0867
Internet: http://www.fpg.unc.edu

National Sleep Foundation

The National Sleep Foundation promotes public understanding of sleep and sleep disorders. Through its brochures and activities, the organizational goals include: increased understanding of the importance of sleep to good health and productivity, prevention and remediation of health and safety problems related to insufficient sleep and untreated sleep disorders, expanded scientific research on sleep and sleep medicine, and the implementation of public policy that promotes sleep education, research, and treatment.

Contact:

National Sleep Foundation
729 15th St. NW, 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
Email: natsleep@erols.com.

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Resources for Parents

Newsletters/Magazines

YOUTH TODAY: The Newspaper on Youth Work

The current issue of this bi-monthly newspaper features articles on topics such as after-school care for youth, providing job training programs, pending federal legislation, youth violence, and increasing youth workers' awareness of safety issues. Subscription price is $14.97.

For more information:

YOUTH TODAY
1200 17th St. NW, 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20036-3006
Telephone: 202-785-0764
Email: hn2759@handsnet.org

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Resources for Parents

NETWorking: Web Sites to Visit

Name: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH)

Description: DASH pursues four strategies: (1) identifying and monitoring highest priority risks; (2) synthesizing and applying research; (3) implementing national programs to prevent these risks; and (4) evaluating and improving those programs. The site offers several full-text publications which include information, statistics, and strategies relating to adolescent health.

Address: http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/

Name: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

Description: The CPSC is an independent Federal regulatory agency that helps keep American families safe by reducing the risk of injury or death from consumer products. The site provides recall information on products, and publications on many safety issues.

Address: http://www.cpsc.gov/

Name: National SafeKids Campaign Online

Description: The National SAFE KIDS Campaign is the only national organization dedicated solely to the prevention of unintentional childhood injury—the number one killer of children ages 14 and under. More than 200 state and local SAFE KIDS coalitions in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico comprise the Campaign. Vice President Al Gore and Tipper Gore are honorary chairs, and former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, M.D., is chairman of the Campaign. The site offers fact sheets, a family safety checklist, links to related sites, a resource catalog, and contact information for campaign members.

Address: http://www.safekids.org/home.html

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Parent News for August 1998

Resources for Parents

Conference Calendar

Note: Only new conferences not previously listed in Parent News are included in this issue. For a full listing of conferences, workshops, and other parenting-related events, go to the PARENTING Calendar section of NPIN.

Conference: Communities for Youth Conference

Sponsor: Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Community Health and Prevention

Date: August 5-7, 1998

Place: Hyatt Regency Hotel, Chicago, Illinois

Description: As part of the ongoing technical assitance for staff in community-based agencies, this conference will highlight the national perspective on priority issues for youth, showcase some of Illinois' most innovative community-based youth programs, and present a holistic approach to problems and needs of children and adolescents.

Contact:

Theresa Maggiore
Telephone: 217-793-7353, ext. 109
Internet: http://www.prevention.org/conference/brief.html

Conference: Strengthening Families through Public/Private Partnerships: Connecting Fathers

Sponsor: Ford Foundation; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Women's Health; and California Family Health Council

Date: August 27-28, 1998

Place: Oakland Marriott City Center, Oakland, California

Description: This conference will provide an opportunity to stimulate dialogue about emerging father-centered initiatives by promoting coalition-building, encouraging broad and diverse partnerships, and motivating organizations to connect fathers to the family. Keynote speakers include: Dr. Alvin Poussaint, actor Edward James Olmos, and author Geoffrey Canada.

Contact:

Fatherhood Conference
National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning & Community Leadership
1133 20th St. NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-822-6725

Conference: Investing in the Child, the Family and the Community

Date: September 15-16, 1998

Place: Natcher Conference Center–The National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland

Description: The fifth North American Conference on the Family and Correction will uphold families of offenders as a valued resource to themselves and their communities. Participants and presenters will provide a wide variety of perspectives on family programs and services.

Contact:

Family and Corrections Network
32 Oak Grove Rd.
Palmyra, VA 22963
Telephone: 804-589-3036
Fax: 804-589-6520
Internet: http://www.fcnetwork.org

Conference: 1998 Work/Family Congress

Date: September 16-18, 1998

Place: New York Hilton, New York, New York

Description: The second Work/Family Congress is dedicated to providing a forum for business, political, and educational professionals to meet and discuss how work/life concerns are changing the nation's workforce and the influence these changes have over how we can and should do business.

Contact:

MC^2 Conferences
135 West 50th St., 16th floor
New York, NY 10020
Telephone: 888-765-6192

Fax: 212-445-6238
Email: mc2events@aol.com

Conference: Parent Involvement: Building the Future for Texas Schools

Sponsor: Texas Education Agency

Date: October 9-10, 1998

Place: Sheraton Astrodome Hotel, Houston, Texas

Description: The Third Annual Statewide Parent Involvement Conference will aim to increase parent involvement in the education of children by empowering parents and by celebrating successful programs and promising practices at all levels of the educational system.

Contact:

Albert Black, Director
Office of Parent Involvement and Community Empowerment
Telephone: 512-475-3488
Fax: 512-463-9176

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  by Dr. Amy Aidman
- Community Spotlight:
  A High School that Works for Children
  by Katy Kelly Epstein, Ph.D.
- Of Interest:
  - Helping Young Children Make New Friends at School by Ann-Marie Clark
  - Parent Involvement
  - Directory of Hotlines and Online Services for Parents by Dawn Ramsburg
  - Television Violence: Content, Context, and Consequences (1997 ERIC Digest) by Dr. Amy Aidman
  - National Family Literacy Day Highlights PACT (Parent and Child Together) Activities by Anne S. Robertson
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Parent News Editorial Information

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Production Editor: Emily S. Van Hyning

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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster

Parent News for September-October 1998

What's New on NPIN

For a listing and description of items that are new on NPIN over the last three months, see the What's New on NPIN section on the NPIN Home Page.

What's New: Resources added to NPIN during August 1998

Several new items have been added to several topical areas in the Resources for Parents / Full Text of Parenting-Related Materials section.

In the Children's Health and Nutrition section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Automobile Safety During the Early Years*
  For many, one of the joys of summer is traveling by automobile with young children to visit family members or tour recreational sites. But far too often we hear of fatalities that occur when children are left alone in closed, hot vehicles, or were improperly seated. Tragedies like these can be avoided by following some basic guidelines.
- *Back to Sleep: Reduce the Risk of SIDS*
  SIDS is the sudden and unexplained death of an infant under one year of age. Sometimes referred to as "crib death," SIDS strikes nearly 5,000 babies in the United States every year. Proper steps should be taken to form public awareness.

In the Parents and Schools as Partners section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *A Community Guide to Youth Anti-Bias and Conflict Resolution Programs*
  This guide describes the many ways to teach bias reduction and violence prevention in order to help schools, community and religious leaders, and parents decide which project is best for their children.
- *A Guide to Computer Learning in Your Child's School*
  Why should children be educated with computers? This article goes through the many possibilities of the computer as a powerful tool for education.
- *Guia Para Evaluar y Ubicar a Estudiantes de Idiomas Minoritarios*
  Esta guía ayudará a los padres a entender como las escuelas evalúan la destreza en inglés de sus hijos, y sugiere formas de como los padres pueden ayudar a las escuelas a ubicar a sus hijos en el mejor programa de idioma.

In the Parents and Families in Society section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Will a Focus School Meet the Needs of Your Child?*
  Most large schools have many types of programs and serve many children with a wide variety of education needs. Smaller schools, serving fewer students, are able to have a more defined "personality," or focus. This discussion will help parents understand the different types of schools that call themselves focus schools, and the benefits and drawbacks of each.

Reviews or summaries of the following parenting-related books were added to the Parenting Resources: Books section of NPIN:

- *Teach Your Own: A Hopeful Path for Education (Third Edition)*, by John Holt. 1997
- *Circle of Love: Relationships between Parents, Providers, and Children in Family Child Care*,by Amy C. Baker and Lynn A. Manfredi/Petitt. 1998
- *The War against Parents: What We Can Do for America's Beleaguered Moms and Dads*, by Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Cornel West. 1998
- *Adolescent Health Problems: Behavioral Perspectives*, by Jan L. Wallander, Ed., Lawrence J. Siegel, Ed. 1995

Information on the following parenting-related organizations was added to the Resources for Those Who Work with Parents: Organizations section of NPIN:

- Best Friends Foundation
- Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center
- National Sleep Foundation

Information on the following parenting-related newsletters was added to the Parenting Resources: Newsletters section of NPIN:

- YOUTH TODAY: The Newspaper on Youth Work

Several new links to Internet resources were added in the Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents section.

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Parent News for September-October 1998

September's Feature

Understanding Violent Acts in Children: An Interview with Dr. Edward Taylor

by Dr. Amy Aidman

In the aftermath of a series of shootings that occurred in schools over the past school year, public attention is once again focused on violent behavior among young people and what can be done to prevent it. We interviewed Professor Edward Taylor of the University of Illinois School of Social Work to get his views about the mental states of children who commit violent acts. Professor Taylor is Chair of the Mental Health Concentration within the School of Social Work. His research interests include the etiology, diagnoses, prevention, and treatment of childhood neurobiological and behavior disorders.

In Part I of Professor Taylor's comments we focus on the roles of situations and events in childhood violence, the possible role of mental illness, the warning signs, the role of attachment to moral authorities and peers, and what concerned adults can do to intervene before violence occurs. Next month we will follow up this article with information about conflict resolution programs.

Amy: In the past year there have been a number of news stories about students who have become violent and have attacked and even killed other students and teachers. With the beginning of the school year upon us, we think it is a good time to begin to deal with this issue. How can we prevent violence in the schools?

Dr. Taylor: There are two ways to think about this question. The kind of sudden killing that we saw in the schools last year may not have been preventable, in the final analysis, because these were done by children who have mental health needs or social-developmental needs of the most extreme kind. While it's not possible to diagnose the children involved in those incidents based on news stories, we should focus our attention on how we can deal with preventable violence. We should be thinking about this issue in terms of two different kinds of groups of children. *One group is driven by impulse, by peers, by situational, environmental factors.* They have mental health needs but are not mentally ill in the classical sense. *The other group would be those that have severe mental illness.*

While each group has mental health needs, the first group is more likely to be influenced by situations such as changes at home or in peer relationships. It is critical to pay attention in order to identify children (especially those who may be undergoing stress because of difficult situations in their lives) who have difficulty in controlling their impulses and who become extremely angry or upset with very little pushing or provocation from peers or parents. One of the things educators and school mental health workers can do is to find out from parents whether they think their child may need help controlling his or her impulses. While only a small number of children who have difficulty controlling their impulses will become explosive—that is, damage property or hurt other people—special attention should be given to children who cry, yell, or become disturbed at the "drop of a hat" out of proportion to the event that is taking place.

Parents should be asked if they are having difficulty with children whom other adults have observed as having problems with impulse control. My experience over the years is that most of these parents are waiting for someone to give them suggestions on how to handle their children…that they would welcome the assistance of a school counselor, a school social worker, or a school psychologist to help them get their child under control. Most likely these parents are worried, too. Communicating with the families of children who are behaving in ways that indicate problems with impulse control is a better way to ward off potentially explosive situations than casting a wider net through broad "pencil and paper" screenings. Again, we must remember that poor impulse control is more of an indicator of neuro-developmental and possible mental health problems than it is an indicator of violence. Most children with mental health needs, as well as serious mental illnesses, will not become violent or dangerous.

Teachers, social workers, school counselors, and school psychologists should be trained to look for unexplained changes in the demeanor of children. If parents are going through stress due to marital problems, economic difficulties, illness, or other negative changes in the family, this stress can create situational problems for children that may contribute to anxiety and depression. In most cases, it is not clinical long-term depression, but it is a change in affect or emotion or mood which is often missed. We are learning that when children experience changes in their moods they are more likely to behave in agitated or aggressive ways than do adults who become situationally depressed. Parents and other concerned adults would do well to **anticipate** depression and/or aggression when children face problems that they do not know how to solve. Children don't know what to do, for instance, when a parent loses a job.

Amy: Why do children act out more than adults do?

Dr. Taylor: When children experience depression, whether it is situational, as in the case of adjusting to a crisis or change, or whether it is clinical, biological, long-term depression, they tend to become more agitated (show signs of getting quickly upset, answering tersely, crying easily, pacing, etc.) than usual. This agitation can easily push a child into aggressive activities. For example, a child who normally would not shove another child or be verbally aggressive may suddenly exhibit these behaviors. One reason is that children who are dealing with frightening feelings that they do not understand undergo changes in the way they perceive the world. Because they are so young they have very few experiences in life that would suggest to them alternative ways of solving problems. On top of that, depression depletes our energy, making it hard for us to solve problems. While older teens and adults may express their sadness through withdrawal, children often tend to express it through agitation, aggressive behavior, and dropping out of their usual activities. When this happens, someone needs to recognize the symptoms and begin to talk to the child about what is going on in his or her life. Immediate attention needs to be given to a child who suddenly stops enjoying his or her daily activities and peers, or for no known reason drops out of previously enjoyed activities. And, obviously, any child who talks about suicide, is obsessed with ideas of hurting others, or harms animals, should be evaluated by a mental health professional.

Amy: Who should be responsible for talking to parents about children?

Dr. Taylor: While there are many people who can do it, this role is a natural one for school social workers and school psychologists. They are trained to deal with parents' responses, which may include anger, talking about problems only partly related to the child, or denial. Some parents will welcome help and want more information. The scariest situation is when families become angry. Social workers and psychologists have the training to deal with a family that reacts in anger to an attempt to communicate about a child. Social workers and psychologists are trained to deal with a variety of family reactions and help parents better communicate about their child.

The teachers, who are on the front-line, are in the best position to identify the changes in a child and start the referral process. Parents need to know before the school year starts and problems are identified that teachers are trained and have a responsibility to identify "special needs" children.

Amy: What about other students' roles?

Dr. Taylor: That's a difficult question. Students should be taught to report when other children are having difficulty, but it's very difficult for a child to identify and to have responsibility for prevention. The bigger thing is that students have to be made to feel safe to be able to report to teachers and counselors when they are being threatened by other children, or when they feel upset and worried.

Amy: Most parents are more likely to be dealing with the situation of providing for the safety of their own children, rather than dealing with the prevention of violent behavior in their own children. As a responsible parent, how can one teach children to notice warning signs and to take appropriate action without stigmatizing themselves?

Dr. Taylor: It is easy to say that good communication with children is important. We all want and idealize that as parents. But children have their own private lives, their own personalities, and their own temperaments. It is not necessarily a sign that a family doesn't have good communication when children don't tell parents everything that is going on in their lives.

The first thing we want to do is convince children that their safety is a dual responsibility. It's the child's responsibility and it's the parents' responsibility. Part of the child's responsibility is trying to avoid danger. Children need specific information and training from the home on how to stay away from potential trouble. There are some children who just naturally avoid getting caught up in arguments and in dares, but some children need to be taught that skill. Teaching kids about not agitating, about not taking a dare, about not getting in fights, is a part of what we want to do. That's being idealistic, the idea that we, as parents, are going to do that successfully.

The second part is letting children know that they can safely come to parents and that parents will take action to keep them safe. That becomes a very difficult thing to do. When children are being victimized and harassed on school buses and playgrounds, parents have to take a very strong proactive stand. They have to become involved with the school and start to turn in names, insist that the school call the parents of the children that are harassing, and have the counselors get involved.

One of the things that is most important from a mental health point of view is that the children who are victimizing other children get seen by counseling personnel and get into groups that deal with their aggressiveness. Schools sometimes need the pressure of parents to push that. Unfortunately, many schools simply do not have the personnel to do it. That means parents in those schools need to start forming parent committees, they need to be talking to the schools about a parent riding the buses, and they need to have parents at each of the bus stops. These are things that in some communities are a "must" to do.

Amy: A recent news story describes how a normal dance competition among young girls led to extreme competitiveness which resulted in the victimization of one of the girls. This would probably fall under the category of situationally triggered behavior. What are some things children need help with in order to avoid becoming violent, as happened in this incident?

Dr. Taylor: This sounds like the kind of event in which a child has not been helped with impulse control, with values clarification, or with the process of learning how to form alternative solutions. Research shows that one of the biggest identifying marks of children who are going to get into conduct problems and legal problems are children who have difficulty forming alternative solutions, as well as children who cannot use mitigating information.

An example might be that a child is standing in line and thinks the person behind him has pushed him and prepares to react. After assessing the situation the child realizes that the person behind him actually fell. He adjusts his reaction based on the knowledge that he was not really pushed. In that case the child is using mitigating information to inform his reaction. In the case you mention, it seems as though there are problems with impulse control, with the formation of alternative solutions, as well as with the use of mitigating information. All of those problems could be a part of a severe mental illness, but they could also be a part of social learning, how we are taught to respect authority, how we are trained to respond in difficult situations, and what we think our peers expect us to do. That is one of the biggest issues.

When you think about attachment, we often think about attachment from a hierarchical point of view, and one of the most important issues in understanding violence is peer and gang-related violence. A lot of times we talk about "gangs" and they are really not formal gangs, they are closely-knit cohorts of kids. The issue is that if on the hierarchy of attachment, I am more attached to my peer group than I am to adult authority figures…I may know that my parents don't want me to use knives, don't want me to fight, and I hate disappointing them, but it is more important for me not to disappoint the group which is at the highest point in my attachment hierarchy, which is my peers. Therefore, in a situation where I am angry, my question to myself is, "What would my peers want me to do?" And if I am running around with kids who say, "You should have stuck her, she deserved to be cut…", I practice that over and over again and so when I get into a situation where I listen to my impulse, I am losing my ability to make choices. What I have practiced and who I most don't want to disappoint are my peers. That is how violence often takes place. Now when, in the aftermath, these children get caught, they are embarrassed and many times upset that they have disappointed their parents. It is very understandable. It is not that they don't want to follow their parents, it's that their parents are at a lower point in the hierarchy of attachment, so that after the act is done, they simply feel trapped that they had to please the group that is more important to them.

Amy: What about the issue of social status?

Dr. Taylor: That becomes part of how I pick who is in the hierarchy of attachment. It depends on how I perceive gaining status. The value that I give status plays into how I place my attachment. We would hope that we are constantly shifting how we want status. We would hope that children have such strong attachment to a moral figure that even when they're in a situation when status with a peer is the most important—that when push comes to shove—they go back to a hierarchical idea of attachment, so that it is more important for them to feel or to fear that they have disappointed the moral figure than disappointed peers or gained status. That's what keeps a lot of kids out of trouble. One of the things we want to be watching is when children seem to be placing higher attachment or having greater allegiance to other children across environmental situations than for parents, grandparents, and authority types of figures. Every child will talk back to a parent or to a teacher—they're trying to gain a little bit of status, but most children reach a point where they will not cross the line, such as cursing at a teacher, because of the detrimental nature of it or the disappointment it will cause to the moral authority. Other children lose sight of that and keep trying to gain status by "upping the ante" in, for example, how they talk to the teacher. I think those are signs of children who need to have a comprehensive mental health assessment and be placed in social skills groups.

One of the things we have found is that the most successful way of dealing with conduct problems is giving social skills training for the child and parental training for the family. Just attacking the problem with the child almost never works. This does not mean the parents are "bad," but does imply that the parenting methods are not effective for their child. So now we're talking about a great deal of personnel power, money, problems of getting parents who may not have time or are embarrassed. Getting parents to training can be a very difficult task It takes a lot of persistence and a lot of organizational power to do this. Most schools in their counseling programs, and unfortunately many community mental health programs, simply don't have that power. I must also point out that some children in addition to needing social skills and conflict resolution training will not be able to control their impulses without medication treatment.

The second part of this interview, dealing with conflict resolution programs, will appear in next month's Parent News.

Internet Resources

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
http://www.nami.org/

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Facts for Families
http://www.aacap.org/factsfam/index.htm

Justice Information Center, Juvenile Justice Page Documents, Violence and Victimization
http://www.ncjrs.org/jjvict.htm

Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html

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Community Spotlight

A High School That Works for Children

by Kitty Kelly Epstein, Ph.D

Many parents, teachers, and educators struggle with providing an appropriate educational environment for secondary school students, particularly students who are having difficulty. The following article discusses this concern and how one community has continued to provide students from a variety of backgrounds an exceptional high school education.

When my son started high school, I had already spent 18 years working as a teacher and a teacher educator in American secondary schools. I took him with me for a few days in my round of visits to a variety of high schools, urban and suburban. I knew enough people that I could probably have maneuvered his entry into any of them. In the end he chose a school where I had worked a decade earlier, an urban public school in a run-down building. Among the reasons for his choice: "I didn't want to be stuffed in a locker, and I wanted someone to make me do my work."

The Oakland Street Academy has no fights, no guns, no violence. It also has no security guards and no metal detectors. Said parent Velma Boden at a recent meeting with school board members, "My daughter cut EVERY day at School X [the nearby large high school]. She has not cut once since she has been at Street Academy."

The Street Academy was an outgrowth of the civil rights movement. It was created 25 years ago by the National Urban League, the Oakland Public Schools, and the National Institute of Education. The term "charter school" had not yet been coined, but there were provisions for a few "alternative" schools, and the Street Academy staff began working on a school environment that felt good to urban, disenfranchised youngsters.

Unlike other public alternatives, it has survived and achieved greater recognition each year. It was named a California Distinguished School in 1991, and its nomination was based largely on the academic progress of its African-American male students. It was termed a "miracle school" in one network news broadcast and has often been used as a site for teacher training.

A critical element in its success is size. With 160 students and 10 staff members, everyone knows everyone, a key element in atmosphere control. In fact, one graduate, now a nurse, said that she was able to finish school at Street Academy because it "felt like an elementary school, with a principal who could watch over everything" (Epstein, 1988). The size issue causes some to dismiss the Street Academy's relevance as a model for other schools, but this reaction seems short-sighted. The more successful secondary schools everywhere do tend to be smaller, and this includes most European high schools and the elite private schools of North America. Elementary schools are all small; high schools could be also. Some argue that America's large high schools are already built and cannot be replaced. But the country is beginning to spend enormous amounts on school-based security measures—metal detectors and stationary police or security guards, for example. Building smaller schools would be cheaper in the long run. In the meantime, the large schools might need to be broken up into small, self-enclosed units.

The second element of its success is its philosophy. The typical American high school was founded on the philosophy of people like Elwood Cubberly, for whom the Stanford School of Education is named. In 1909 he said, "Our city schools will soon be forced to give up the exceedingly democratic idea that all are equal." Instead, he said, "Our schools are, in a sense, factories in which the raw products (children) are to be shaped and fashioned into products to meet the various demands of life. The specifications for manufacturing come from the demands of twentieth century civilization, and it is the business of the school to build its pupils to the specifications laid down." Such "hidden" curriculum may still exist. Norm-referenced testing may convince at least 49% of students that they aren't very smart. The daily schedule of 50-minute classes implies to both students and teachers that they are not expected to know each other very well. Instead, like assembly-line products, students have English "welded" onto their brains at 10 a.m., and biology "bolted on" at 11 a.m.

The Street Academy, in contrast, has an egalitarian outlook, implemented every year in a thousand tiny decisions. The school, when offered extra money to become a "continuation school" (generally considered a school for "drop-outs"), rejected the money because students would have received a stigmatizing diploma. Likewise, when offered GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) money for a portion of the students, the staff said "No" with the explanation that "All Street Academy students are gifted."

Each Street Academy student has a "consulting teacher" who is a real force in his or her life. This teacher measures out punishment for minor infractions (for example, late and missed homework); brings the student to "staff meeting" for more major offenses (cutting class or not making academic progress); provides job, college, and medical advice when needed; and keeps in constant contact with the parent about the student's progress. The unstated implication of the consulting teacher system is that each adolescent is worthy of sustained individual attention from a school adult.

The Street Academy curriculum is structured on the assumption that all students should be ready for college. Four days out of five are devoted to an unvarying set of academic subjects which all are expected to complete. Students enroll in three or four academic courses each quarter. Classes are one hour and fifteen minutes long. If a student does not achieve a grade of "C" or better in a class, he or she continues to be enrolled in it the next quarter. On the fifth day, students participate in intensive elective classes. Bicycling class trained for a trip from Northern California to Mexico last year. "Horses on the Hill" takes students to a wealthier section of Oakland to study horsemanship. In "Teachers in Training," youngsters work in an Oakland elementary school classroom as teachers' aides.

The Street Academy practices multiculturalism, which lauds the communities from which its students emerge. A majority of Street Academy staff have always been African-American and Latino. Asian, Latino, Native American, and African-American literature is thoroughly integrated into the curriculum alongside Shakespeare and Chaucer. Racism is explicitly discussed and rejected.

The Street Academy has something in common with the private, elite boarding schools where the children of wealthy parents are ensured school success in a safe, personal, and unbureaucratic environment (Persell, 1979). Those schools assume that each child is worthy of safety, personal attention, knowledge, discipline, and the validation of their class and culture. Large, bureaucratic high schools for poor and working-class children often make none of those assumptions. It is in that sense that Street Academy provides a unique model. It may help to answer some questions about what we should be providing in secondary education for all children.

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Of Interest

Helping Young Children Make New Friends at School

by Ann-Marie Clark

Entering a new school can be a frightening experience for a young child, whether it is caused by a family's moving or comes as the child begins preschool or kindergarten. Apprehension about making friends is often a central issue. Children may be afraid that no one will play with them at recess or sit next to them at lunch. The situation sometimes becomes more difficult because children may be reluctant to talk about these feelings with parents or teachers. However, parents can act positively to help children develop new friendships in new situations.

What Parents Can Do

> **Acknowledge the child's feelings.** It is helpful to listen carefully to children when they are discussing their feelings about friends. It may be more helpful to accept their feelings as part of a legitimate concern than to tell children not to be so concerned or to think about something else. The use of the word "should" can be especially problematic. Children may have difficulty knowing how to deal with their feelings if they are told what they "should" or "should not" feel about making new friends. Instead, parents may choose to reply by restating what they hear their child saying. For example, when a child expresses concern about going out to recess with no one to play with, the parent might first say, "I can tell you are worried about recess tomorrow."
>
> **Make a plan together.** A first step is to ask the child who they would like to have as a friend. Then the parent might arrange to invite the prospective friend for after-school play or may choose to enroll their child in extracurricular activities with the prospective friend. Parents may wish to volunteer to work in scouts or 4-H, or coach sports, so that they might facilitate their child's interactions with others.
>
> **Accept the challenge.** Parents can become good role models in solving problems. They can help children see that the problem of making friends in a new classroom, although sometimes difficult, can be tackled. Talking about possible solutions with the child may be an ongoing useful strategy. Helping the child understand that if one course of action does not work, another can be tried, offers the child reassurance that the problem will eventually be resolved.
>
> **Show empathy.** Parents might think of a time when they were in a similar situation and tell their child how they felt. It might be helpful for them to let the child know that they experienced the same fears about making friends on a new job. They can share with the child what they did to overcome their fear and make new friends.

Give it time. It might be helpful to explain to the child that friendships take time to form. Time invested by parents in helping children make friends can be time well spent.

Helping Newcomers

Studies show that newcomers to children's groups often "hover" around the group in the beginning. Gradually newcomers will try to enter the group as they gain more information and confidence. It can be helpful if an adult temporarily joins the group and invites in the newcomer. This is more effective if it occurs naturally as part of an ongoing activity. In this way, the adult models acceptance of the newcomer and creates a situation in which the newcomer can make a meaningful contribution. Effective social skills are developed best in active social situations.

Sometimes the adult can forewarn a particular child who has good social skills about the newcomer to ensure that a "leader" will accept the child and model the inclusive behavior for the children. Assigning the newcomer to a "buddy" to show him or her around and explain procedures is also helpful. When children are given opportunities to work together to solve problems, they are often better able to develop effective social skills in situations that ultimately contribute to making friends.

Conclusion

Feelings of anxiety are normal when entering an unfamiliar environment, such as beginning a new school, particularly when friendships have not yet been formed. Parents can support children in working through these feelings and in making new friends in their new school.

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Of Interest

Parent Involvement

While many schools are working hard to involve parents in their children's education, most parents would like even more information and help on how to support their children both at school and at home, according to a report released this month.

"Family Involvement in Education: A National Portrait" presents findings from phone interviews with 376 parents of elementary and middle school students. When issuing the report, Education Secretary Riley noted that it "offers a snapshot of the specific opportunities and the barriers to family involvement in education as seen through the eyes of parents and will be useful in helping others evaluate their experiences." The survey was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, and the GTE Foundation.

A companion report, "Questions Parents Ask about Schools," answers some of the most frequent concerns that parents have on schoolwork, homework, safety, and preparing children for a career. For example, regarding schoolwork, the report advises: "Ask to see examples of successful student work and compare it to your child's work;" and, on safety, "Know your child's friends. . . Listen to their stories about what they do when they are with other adults and when adults aren't around."

Both publications are available on the Department's Web site at:

http://www.ed.gov/PDFDocs/portrait.pdf
and
http://www.ed.gov/Family/agbts/Questions/

Single paper copies may be requested by calling 877-4ED-PUBS.

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Of Interest

Directory of Hotlines and Online Services for Parents

by Dawn Ramsburg

In the May 1997 issue of *Parent News,* we compiled a list of hotlines and online help services for parents who may have an urgent parenting need or who need help with a specific issue such as homework. In this issue of *Parent News,* we are adding several new hotlines to this list.

Nationwide Parenting Hotlines

Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Information Line
800-514-0301
800-514-0383 (TTY)

Boy's Town National Hotline
Provides crisis intervention, information, and referrals for children and families. Spanish-speaking counselors and access to translation services for 100 other languages are also available.
800-448-3000 (24 hours a day/7 days a week)
800-448-1833 (TTY)

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) AIDS Hotline
800-342-2437
800-344-7432 (Spanish)
800-243-7889 (TTY)

Child Abuse Hotline
Provides services to children and adults involved with child abuse.
800-422-4453 (24 hours a day/7 days a week)

Child Find Hotline
Helps parents locate children and helps lost children who need assistance.
800-I-AM-LOST (9 am-5 pm EST, Monday-Friday)

Child Help USA Hotline
Provides crisis counseling as well as general information on child abuse and related issues.
800-422-4453 (24 hours a day/7 days a week)

Down's Syndrome Hotline
Provides information and referral services to new parents; information on education, support groups,

medical research, newsletter; and information on conferences.
800-221-4602 (9 am-5 pm EST, Monday-Friday)

Kid Save
Provides information and referrals to public and private services for children and adolescents in crisis.
800-543-7283 (24 hours a day/7 days a week)

National AIDS hotline
Answers basic questions about AIDS/HIV (prevention, transmission, testing, health care).
800-342-AIDS (24 hours a day/7 days a week)
800-344-7432 (Spanish) (8 am-2 am EST)
800-AID-7889 (TTY) (10 am-10 pm EST, Monday-Friday)
800-234-TEEN (Teens)

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
Provides assistance to parents and law enforcement officials who seek help with a missing or exploited child case, who want prevention information on how to safeguard children, and who need help with reunification once the child is found.
800-THE-LOST (24 hours a day/7 days a week)

National Immunization Information Hotline
Provides referrals and information on shots infants need.
800-232-2522 (24 hours a day/7 days a week)

NineLine
Helps parents with problems with their kids, and provides referrals for youth or parents on drugs, homelessness, and runaways. If all counselors are busy, stay on the line and one will be with you as soon as possible.
800-999-9999 (24 hours a day/7 days a week)

Parent Information and Referral Center
Designed for anyone taking care of kids (parents, grandparents, day care providers, etc.) who have questions.
800-690-2282

Raising Today's Teen
A national helpline for parents raising teens. Trained parent counselors are available to provide problem-solving techniques and communication solutions to parents and to help strengthen parenting skills.
800-475-TALK (10 am-5 pm MST, Monday-Friday)

Teen Help
Provides a national toll-free hotline designed to assist parents, child care professionals, and others in locating appropriate resources for the treatment of struggling adolescents.
800-637-0701

U.S. Department of Education's Information Resource Center
800-USA-LEARN

U.S. Department of Justice's Americans with Disabilities Act Information Line

800-515-0301
800-514-0383 (TDD)

Parenting Hotlines for Specific Areas

Baby Your Baby Hotline (in Utah only)
A toll-free resource for all pregnant women and their families in Utah. Provides assistance with prenatal care, finding child care, information on immunizations, or where to find parenting support groups.
800-826-9662 (7:30 am-5:30 pm, Monday-Friday)

Contact Parent Helpline (in Tennessee only)
A 24-hour parent helpline for residents of Knox, Blount, and Sevier Counties in Tennessee.
423-523-9124

Families Answer Line (in Iowa only)
Provides answers to questions relating to home and family.
800-262-3804 (8 am-5 pm CST, Monday-Friday)
800-854-1658 (TDD)

Families with a Future Hotline (in Illinois only)
For parents in Illinois who need help with prenatal and newborn care. Services also available in Spanish.
800-545-2200

Florida Network (in Florida only)
A statewide toll-free hotline for parents of troubled teens.
888-41FAMILY (24 hours a day)

Kids Help (in Canada only)
Kids Help is Canada's only toll-free national telephone counseling service for children and youth. Parents, teachers, and other concerned adults are also welcome to call for information and referral services.
800-668-6868 (24 hours a day/7 days a week for any telephone in Canada)

Parent Line (in Michigan only)
Provides information and assistance to parents in Michigan.
800-942-4357

Parent Line (in North Dakota only)
Provides information and assistance to parents in North Dakota.
800-258-0808
231-7923 in Fargo

Parents Anonymous (See local listings)
There are over 1,200 organizations nationwide, most with some type of crisis service. Check your local phone listings for the number in your area.
Parents Anonymous of Arizona provides a 24-hour hotline for Arizona residents only.
800-352-0528
Parents Anonymous of New Hampshire provides a 24-hour toll-free hotline for New Hampshire residents only.

800-750-4494

Texas Education Agency Parent Hotline
This hotline allows parents to discuss special education procedures.
800-252-9668 (8 am-5 pm CST, Monday-Friday)

Commercial Parenting Hotlines

American Baby Helpline
Provides advice on a variety of baby-related topics, such as discipline or feeding. Calls costs $.95 per minute.
900-860-4888 (24 hours a day/7 days a week)

Parenting Tips Hotline
For helpful tips on: baby before birth, toddler training, pre-teens and teens. Plus tips on: breast feeding, bedtime, tantrums, schools, and talking about sex. Costs $2.00 per minute.
900-988-0187 ext. 224

Homework Hotlines

Dial-A-Teacher
Free service run by the New York City teachers' union and the United Federation of Teachers. Can provide answers in French, Spanish, German, Chinese, Arabic, Hebrew, and Creole. Closed on school holidays.
212-777-3380 (4-7 pm EST, Monday-Thursday)

Homework Hotline
Provides advice to help your child succeed in spelling, math, vocabulary, reading, memory, and "learning how to learn." Calls cost $2.75 a minute.
900-443-3233 ext. 500 (24 hours a day/7 days a week)

Homework Hotline
The Homework Hotline, established in March 1991, is a free support service which helps middle school and high school students understand and solve problems related to mathematics and science.
812-877-8435 (7 pm-10 pm, Sunday-Thursday from September through May)
800-828-0782 (toll-free in Indiana only)
Problems can also be submitted online to:
hotline@nextwork.rose-hulman.edu

Parenting Help Online

Parents AskERIC
An electronic mail question-and-answer service for parents and those who work with parents on issues related to child development, care, and education.
Askeric@ericir.syr.edu

Homework Help Online

Dr. Math
Provides assistance with math as well as other homework problems. Operated by the Math Forum of Swarthmore College and financed by the National Science Foundation.
http://forum.swarthmore.edu/dr.math

Family Education Network
Provides general information on a variety of topics.
http://www.family.education.com

Homework Help
Click on one of the links on the main Homework Help page and you'll go to a general discussion on that academic subject. Once you are in one of the areas, you're free to browse the questions and responses, or to post a question of your own. Teachers from several school districts in the Twin Cities area (Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN) monitor the discussions and will post responses to your questions. They may point you to someplace on the Internet where you can find the answer on your own, or they may provide the answer and then point you to places where you can find out even more.
http://www.startribune.com/stonline/html/special/homework/index.html

KidsConnect
Provides answers to questions sent via Email within 48 hours. Staffed with volunteer online librarians. Run by the American Association of School Librarians.
http://www.ala.org/ICONN/kidsconn.html

Monroe County Public Library (Bloomington, IN)
Provides an Email question-and-answer service.
askus@monroe.lib.in.us

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Parent News for September-October 1998

Of Interest

Television Violence: Content, Context, and Consequences

1997 ERIC DIGEST

by Dr. Amy Aidman

ERIC/EECE Digests are short reports on topics of current interest in education. Digests are targeted to teachers, administrators, parents, policy makers, and other practitioners. They are designed to provide an overview of information on a given topic and references to items that provide more detailed information. Reviewed by subject experts who are content specialists in the field, the Digests are funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) of the U.S. Department of Education.

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http://ericeece.org/pubs/digests.html

Social science research conducted over the past 40 years supports the conclusion that viewing violent television programming has negative consequences for children, and the research suggests three areas in which watching violent television programs can impact young viewers:

1. Media violence can encourage children to learn aggressive behavior and attitudes.

2. Media violence can cultivate fearful or pessimistic attitudes in children about the non-television world.

3. Media violence can desensitize children to real-world and fantasy violence.

According to Eron (1992), "(t)here can no longer be any doubt that heavy exposure to televised violence is one of the causes of aggressive behavior, crime, and violence in society. The evidence comes from both the laboratory and real-life studies. Television violence affects youngsters of all ages, of both genders, at all socioeconomic levels and all levels of intelligence. The effect is not limited to children who are already disposed to being aggressive and is not restricted to this country" (p. 1).

This digest reports recent findings on violent television content, highlights the recently developed television ratings system, and offers suggestions for parental guidance and mediation of children's viewing of television programs.

Not All Violence Is Equal

The National Television Violence Study (NTVS) is the largest study of media content ever undertaken. It is a three-year study that assesses the amount, nature, and context of violence in entertainment programming, examines the effectiveness of ratings and advisories, and reviews televised anti-violence educational initiatives. The study, which began in 1994 and is funded by the National Cable Television Association, defines television violence as "any overt depiction of the use of physical force—or credible threat of physical force—intended to physically harm an animate being or group of beings. Violence also includes certain depictions of physically harmful consequences against an animate being or group that occur as a result of unseen violent means" (National Television Violence Study, Executive Summary, 1996, p. ix).

Not all violence is equal, however. While some violent content can convey an anti-violence message, it is typical to sanitize, glamorize, or even glorify violence on U.S. television. According to the National Television Violence Study (Federman, 1997), only 4% of programs coded had a strong anti-violence theme in the 1995-96 season. In the two years of the study that have been reported, 58% (1994-95) and 61% (1995-96) of programs coded contained some violence.

Certain plot elements in portrayals of violence are considered high risk for children and should be evaluated by parents when judging possible program effects for children. Characterizations in which the perpetrator is attractive are especially problematic because viewers may identify with such a character. Other high-risk factors include showing violence as being justified, going unpunished, and having minimal consequences to the victim. Realistic violence is also among the high-risk plot elements.

NTVS findings from 1995-96 indicate that these high-risk plot elements abound in U.S. broadcast and cable television. Of all violent acts, 40% were committed by attractive characters, and 75% of violent actions went unpenalized and the perpetrators showed no remorse. In 37% of the programs, the "bad guys" were not punished, and more than half of all violent incidents did not show the suffering of the victim.

Based on reviews of social science research, it is possible to predict some effects of violent viewing in conjunction with specific plot elements:

Aggressive behavior: Learning to use aggressive behavior is predicted to increase when the perpetrator is attractive, the violence is justified, weapons are present, the violence is graphic or extensive, the violence is realistic, the violence is rewarded, or the violence is presented in a humorous fashion. Conversely, the learning of aggression is inhibited by portrayals that show that violence is unjustified, show perpetrators of violence punished, or show the painful results of violence.

Fearful attitudes: The effects of fearful attitudes about the real world may be increased by a number of features, including attractive victims of violence; unjustified violence; graphic, extensive, or realistic violence; and rewards to the perpetrator of violence. According to the work of George Gerbner and his colleagues (1980), heavy viewers of violent content believe their world is meaner, scarier, and more dangerous than their lighter-viewing counterparts. When violence is punished on television, the expected effect is a decrease in fearful attitudes about the real world.

Desensitization: Desensitization to violence refers to the idea of increased toleration of violence. It is predicted from exposure to extensive or graphic portrayals and humorous portrayals of violence and is of particular concern as a long-term effect for heavy viewers of violent content. Some of the most violent programs are children's animated series in which violence is routinely intended to be funny, and realistic consequences of violence are not shown.

Viewer Differences

Just as not all violence is equal, there are distinctions to be made among viewers. Characteristics such as age, experience, cognitive development, and temperament should be considered as individual factors that can interact with the viewing of violent content. Very young children, for example, have an understanding of fantasy and reality different from that of older children and adults. They may be more frightened by fantasy violence because they do not fully understand that it is not real. When parents consider their children's viewing, both age and individual differences should be taken into account.

Using Television Ratings as Guidelines

As a result of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, a ratings system has been developed by the television industry in collaboration with child advocacy organizations. It is currently in use by some of the networks. Eventually ratings will also be used in conjunction with the V-chip, a device that can be programmed to electronically block selected programming. Beginning in 1998, new television sets are to include V-chip technology.

Ratings categories are based on a combination of age-related and content factors as listed below. These ratings may help parents determine what they consider appropriate for their children to watch. However, it is important to consider that ratings may make programs appear more attractive to some children, possibly creating a "forbidden fruit" appeal. Furthermore, critics point out the potentially problematic nature of having the television industry rate its own programs, and these critics support the development of alternative rating systems by non-industry groups.

TV-Y: All Children
TV-Y7: Directed to Older Children
TV-G: General Audience
TV-PG: Parental Guidance Suggested
TV-14: Parents Strongly Cautioned
TV-MA: Mature Audience Only

A content advisory for fantasy violence, FV, may be added to the TV-Y7 rating. Several content codes may be added to the TV-PG, TV-14, and TV-MA ratings. These are V for intense violence; S for intense sexual situations; L for strong, coarse language; and D for intensely suggestive dialogue.

Beyond Ratings: What Can Parents Do?

Parents can be effective in reducing the negative effects of viewing television in general and violent television in particular.

1. Watch television with your child. Not only does watching television with children provide parents with information about what children are seeing, but active discussion and explanation of television programs can increase children's comprehension of content, reduce stereotypical thinking, and increase prosocial behavior.

2. Turn the program off. If a portrayal is upsetting, simply turn off the television and discuss your reason for doing so with your child.

3. Limit viewing. Set an amount of time for daily or weekly viewing (suggested maximum limit is 2 hours per day), and select programs that are appropriate for the child's age.

4. Use television program guides or a VCR. Television program guides can be used to plan and discuss viewing with your child. A VCR is useful for screening programs, building a video library for children, pausing to discuss points, and fast-forwarding through commercials.

5. Encourage children to be critical of messages they encounter when watching television. Talking about TV violence gives children alternative ways to think about it. Parents can point out differences between fantasy and reality in depictions of violence. They can also help children understand that in real life, violence is not funny. Discussion of issues underlying what is on the screen can help children to become critical viewers.

For More Information

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Of Interest

National Family Literacy Day Highlights PACT (Parent and Child Together) Activities

by Anne S. Robertson

Four or five parents, and about twice as many children, were busily occupied around a long table scattered with potters clay and various types of tools. Both parents and children talked and laughed together as they hammered, rolled, and scrunched their clay into various shapes. PACT time at a local family center brings these families together for a few hours each week to engage in a variety of fun learning activities.

Parent and Child Together, or PACT time, is a key component for many parenting education classes, family literacy programs, and home visiting. To create PACT time, parenting educators develop examples of inexpensive and fun activities that parents and children can do together on a regular basis where the activity reinforces, for the parent, that play is legitimate learning. The activities are designed to enhance both learning and the parent-child relationship, as parents learn ways to observe their child's development, encourage the child's participation, and encourage language acquisition and the development of other skills while the parent and child have fun together. Early research indicates that including PACT time as a consistent component in parenting education is an important "quality consideration" of parenting programs (Dwyer, 1995 p.19-23). Having PACT time with other parents and a parenting educator provides parents with the opportunity to observe how other families interact. Parents appear to benefit from this experience. Some examples of PACT time might include:

- Reading, telling stories, and singing with children
- Creating a story book out of drawings or clippings from magazines or catalogs
- Taking the children to the library
- Going on a nature hunt and picnic in the park
- Cooking a favorite meal or dessert together while practicing pouring and measuring
- Making puppets and then creating a story

On November 1, National Family Literacy Day, co-sponsored by the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) and Toyota, will be celebrated across the country with a variety of events that will showcase family literacy (http://www.famlit.org/nfld.html). PACT time will be highlighted as part of the unique educational approach of family literacy. The National Center for Family Literacy is a nonprofit organization developed to promote leadership for family literacy nationwide in the areas of staff development, practice, information, research, policy, and sustainable support systems. If you would like to include information about your program and how you will celebrate the day in the National Center for Family Literacy's newsletter or Web site, please send your family literacy story to:

National Family Literacy Day (NCFL)
325 West Main St., Ste 200

Louisville, KY 40202-4251

For more information:

National Head Start Association
201 N. Union St., Suite 320
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone: 703-739-0875
Internet: http://www.nhsa.org/

The National Center for Family Literacy
325 West Main St., Suite 200
Louisville, KY 40202-4251
Telephone: 502-584-1133
Internet: http://www.famlit.org/

Parents as Teachers National Center, Inc.
10176 Corporate Square Dr., Suite 230
St. Louis, MO 63132
Telephone: 314-432-4330
Internet: http://www.patnc.org/

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

Child Care Now! Special Report. Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C.

This publication explores the need for child care, particularly for low-income families, and the social importance of high-quality child care. These factors are the impetus for the Campaign for Child Care NOW! organized by the Children's Defense Fund. This advocacy program is urging Congress to approve legislation that will guarantee funds to help states serve low-income families who need child care help; improve the quality of child care for all children; and provide safe, constructive after-school activities for those children left home alone after school. The report describes some state initiatives for improving child care access. Another section of the report examines common myths about child care regarding parental satisfaction, children's development, access to child care, and other factors. Also included is an article on law enforcement officials who encouraged lawmakers to make greater investments in children's healthy development. PS026517

Children's Defense Fund
25 E St. NW
Washington, DC 20001
Telephone: 202-628-8787
Internet: http://www.childrensdefense.org

Nonresident Fathers Can Make a Difference in Children's School Performance. National Center for Education Statistics Issue Brief.

Using data from the 1996 National Household Education Survey (NHES: 96), this issue brief looks at the involvement of nonresident fathers in terms of how such involvement affects student performance in grades K-12. In the NHES, resident parents reported on whether nonresident parents who had had contact with their children in the past year had participated in any of four types of school activities—general school meeting, regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences, school or class event, and volunteer opportunities. The following findings are highlighted: (1) most nonresident fathers are not very involved in their children's schools; (2) children are less likely to have ever repeated a grade or been suspended or expelled if their nonresident fathers are involved in their schools; (3) children are more likely to get A's in school, to enjoy school, and to participate in extracurricular activities if their nonresident fathers are involved in the schools. The issue brief concludes by noting that inconsistencies about the benefits of nonresident fathers' continued involvement with their children in extant studies may be due in large part to the fact that contact is often used to measure involvement. The current findings suggest that it is not contact, per se, that is associated with improved student outcomes, but rather active participation in children's lives through involvement in the schools. PS026658

National Center for Education Statistics
Washington, DC
Telephone: 800-424-1616
Internet: http://NCES.ed.gov

Family Involvement in Education: A Synthesis of Research for Pacific Educators.

This report examines family involvement in elementary and secondary education, focusing on special concerns for schools in Hawaii and the Pacific Islands. The report identifies barriers to family involvement found among culturally diverse populations and suggests positive directions for overcoming those barriers. Following an introduction, the report discusses the numerous components of family involvement and notes that family, school, and community are three major interrelated spheres of influences on a child's life that can work toward academic success or impede progress. Barriers among culturally diverse populations are described, including prior history of discrimination, generational differences in acculturation, language differences and misconceptions about school, teachers' beliefs and attitudes, and issues of community identity. Barriers posing unique challenges for educators in the Pacific Islands include the lack of a clear definition of family involvement, issues related to the schooling process, cultural barriers, religious priorities, and a belief in the separation of school and home. The report identifies positive directions in family involvement efforts nationwide, including the priority placed on family involvement in the U.S. National Education Goals and the empowerment model to provide an organizational structure for parent involvement programs. Positive directions in the Pacific are presented, including the support for site-based management and the development of a network of parent-community networking centers. The report concludes with recommendations related to emphasizing the value of family involvement in education, identifying relevant barriers to family involvement, seeking culturally appropriate solutions, and using professional development opportunities to enhance family involvement. (Contains 41 references.)
PS026649

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
1099 Alakea St., Suite 2500
Honolulu, HI 96813
Telephone: 808-533-6000
Email: askprel@prel.hawaii.edu
Internet: http://www.prel.hawaii.edu

The First Three Years: A Guide to Selected Videos for Parents and Professionals.

Noting that to promote healthy child development, parents and other caregivers need a variety of supportive resources, a coalition of organizations conducted an independent, comprehensive review of the child development video market and produced a list of selected titles for professionals and parents of young children. The resulting guide presents review information for more than 50 videos in a variety of areas. The reviews are divided into the following areas: (1) child development—understanding and encouraging healthy development; newborn care; early relationships; and communication, learning, and play; (2) health and safety—immunizations and medical care; home safety and first aid; and feeding and nutrition; and (3) parenting and family—adjusting to parenthood; discipline and coping; relationships with siblings; and child care providers. Each entry includes a description, critique, and summary of salient points, including ordering information. The guide concludes with an explanation of research methods and a chart of key points for viewers. PS026667 (Single copy, free of charge.)

Commonwealth Fund
Telephone: 888-777-2744 or 212-606-3840
Internet: http://www.cmwf.org

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Resources for Parents

Book Summaries and Reviews

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1. Fisher, Bobbi. (1998). ***Joyful Learning in Kindergarten (Revised Edition).*** **Heinemann, 361 Hanover St., Portsmouth, NH 03801-3912; Telephone: 800-541-2086; Fax: 800-847-0938 ($27).**

Applying the conditions of natural learning to create caring kindergarten classroom environments may support students as lifelong learners. This book presents a natural learning classroom model for implementing a whole-language approach in kindergarten. The chapters are as follows: (1) "My Beliefs about How Children Learn"; (2) "Applying Whole Language Theories," describing Cambourne's (1988) learning conditions and Holdaway's (1986) natural learning classroom model; (3) "The Room," focusing on permanent and temporary learning centers; (4) "The Start of the Day"; (5) "Shared Reading: Theory," describing shared reading sessions, literacy sets, schema development, and use of familiar texts; (6) "Shared Reading: Practice"; (7) "Organizing Choice Time," focusing on the I CARES management system; (8) "Reading during Choice Time"; (9) "Writing during Choice Time"; (10) "Math and Physical Science during Choice Time"; (11) "Art during Choice Time"; (12) "Dramatic Play Environments"; (13) "The End of the Day"; (14) "Assessment," including recording forms and assessment procedures; (15) "Communicating with Parents"; (16) "Questions Teachers Ask," about issues such as full-day programs, specialist teachers, objectionable toys, and child engagement; (17) "Classroom Management and Organization," detailing the I CARES procedure; (18) "Language Arts," elaborating on the theory and practice of reading and writing; and (19) "Generative Curriculum," examining dramatic play environments and ways to meld teachers' and children's interests and the prescribed curriculum. Four appendices include reproducible forms and classroom ideas. (Contains lists of 192 children's books, 26 professional resources, 19 books for parents, and 153 professional references.) PS026573

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2. Coles, Robert; Coles, Robert E.; Coles, Daniel A.; Coles, Michael H. (1997). ***The Youngest Parents: Teenage Pregnancy as It Shapes Lives.*** **W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10110; Telephone: 800-233-4830; Internet: http://web.wwnorton.com**

This book asks readers to shed preconceptions about teenage pregnancy and listen to the compelling voices of young women and men who are soon to become parents although barely out of childhood themselves. From conversations with teenagers across racial, geographic, and socioeconomic lines, the book weaves a narrative that reveals the aspirations and apprehensions of teenage parents. The book reveals that many pregnant teens believe that their babies will lead lives very different from their own, finding the success that has eluded them, and that teenage fathers' confusion and resentment often give way to a longing for respect and for a way out of lives limited by poverty and poor education. The text is accompanied by two photographic essays of teen families by a professor of photography who lived among young mothers in Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Nova Scotia, and Texas, and by pediatrician who worked for several years with teenage parents in North Carolina. The book's chapters are: (1) "Watching"; (2) "Waiting"; (3) "Welfare"; (4) "Fast-Time"; (5) "Hit and Run"; (6) "Ups and Downs"; (7) "No Caution to Throw to the

Winds"; and (8) "Second Chance." PS026609

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3. Galbraith, Gretchen R. (1997). ***Reading Lives: Reconstructing Childhood, Books, and Schools in Britain, 1870-1920.*** **St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010; Telephone: 212-982-3900; Fax: 212-777-6359 ($39.95).**

The Victorian and Edwardian British cared deeply about what their children were reading. While some feared that unsuitable literature would ruin both the children of the nation and the nation itself, many viewed the power of reading as a key to boundless imaginative and intellectual opportunities. This book examines the role of child literacy in Britain's immense social, economic, and political transformations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Drawing upon recorded histories of childhood, education, literacy, and literature geared toward children, the book reveals how the British perceived books as a potent influence on the identity of their children. It also shows how a widespread preoccupation with the leisure reading of middle-class children resonated with debates about the readings assigned in new publicly funded school for lower-class children. Part 1 of the book is devoted to autobiographic memories of British childhoods lived between 1860 and 1914. Part 2 examines the role children's literature played in forging a middle-class consensus that childhood was a uniquely innocent, imaginative stage of life. Part 3 is devoted to elementary education in London, which was a lightning rod for controversies over the content of curricula and the physical conditions of students. The book's chapters are: (1) "'As through a Telescope Reversed': British Childhoods, 1860-1914"; (2) "Reading Lives and Lives of Reading"; (3) "'Real and Wholesome Pleasure': Critics Guard the Boundaries of Children's Literature"; (4) "Creating a Magazine World"; (5) "'Another Ladder Altogether': Writing for Children"; (6) "An 'Efficient and Suitable' Elementary Education"; (7) "Overpressure in London's Board Schools, 1883-1884"; and (8) "'A Power of Reading': 'The Key to All Knowledge.'" (Contains an index and approximately 156 references.) PS026614

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4. Horner, Steve. (1998). ***Single Parenting from a Father's Heart.*** **Bang! Press, P.O. Box 240152, St. Paul, MN 55124-0152; Telephone: 800-ALL-BOOK, 612-891-1539 ($14.95).**

This book addresses the void in father-oriented parenting material by offering, from a father's point of view, practical, thoughtful, and inspiring solutions to help single parents and their children be more effective, productive, and content. The book's chapters are: (1) "Dedication Comes First," covering such topics as how parents view themselves as single parents, learning to be dedicated, and setting goals; (2) "Effective Communication," addressing techniques to create and maintain open dialogue; (3) "Coping," with topics such as the inevitable struggle, finding support, the family myth, and dealing with stress; (4) "Family Finances," including instilling a sense of value of money in children; (5) "Child Care," including how not to lose the help of a family member; (6) "Teaching Discipline: Obedience to Rules," covering four elements of discipline, corporal punishment, and styles of parental control; (7) "Building Responsibility: Being Accountable," discussing teaching children important values; (8) "Time to Eat," covering meal preparation; and (9) "Where's Your Level of Happiness?," discussing important issues of single parenting. PS026543

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5. Males, Mike A. (1996). ***The Scapegoat Generation: America's War on Adolescents.*** **Common Courage Press, Box 702, Red Bard Rd., Monroe, ME 04951; Telephone: 207-525-0900; Fax:**

207-525-3068 (Paper, $17.95, plus $3 shipping. Maine residents must add 6% sales tax).

Claiming that politicians, private interests, and the media unfairly scapegoat adolescents for America's social problems, this book explodes various myths about teen pregnancy, violence, and risk behaviors. The chapters are: (1) "Impounding the Future," examining trends in various social indicators such as rising rates of child poverty versus declining rates among the elderly, declining school funding versus rising prison populations, and poverty rather than age or race as the biggest factor in violent crime rates; (2) "Fertility Bites," highlighting how the media and policy makers ignore the fact that most teen mothers were impregnated by adult males rather than teen peers; (3) "Breeding Doomsday?," on the role of teen pregnancy in shaping welfare reform attitudes and policy; (4) "Wild in Deceit," noting that attitudes and policy concerning youth violence do not take into account the role of adult-on-child violence; (5) "Nicoteen Fits," noting that the greatest tobacco danger to children and youths are the smoking habits of adults but that the current administration still blames youth smoking on industry advertising and on peer pressure; (6) "Doped on Duplicity," exploring the hypocrisy of the adult generation toward teen drug use, and the outcomes of the misguided "War on Drugs"; (7) "Two-Fisted Double Standards," on teen alcohol use, exploring the effects of teen prohibition and noting that, policy and attitudes to the contrary, teen and adult drunk driving death rates follow strikingly parallel patterns; (8) "Growing Up Referred," refuting the "innately at risk" theory by which social and health scientists have defined the period of adolescence and manufactured a concomitant treatment industry; and (9) "Generation Y," suggesting change strategies to reverse attitudes and policy that have abandoned youth, such as reducing child and teen poverty, and reducing age-based laws that unfairly restrict adolescent opportunity, employment, and freedom. (Contains extensive notes for each chapter.) PS026648

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Resources for Parents

Organizations

The Family Information Network

The Family Information Network (FIN) is a statewide network of parents who work to provide information and support to families with babies and young children who have developmental delays or disabilities.

Contact:

Family Information Network
Family Child Learning Center
143 Northwest Ave., Building A
Tallmadge, OH 44278
Telephone: 330-633-2055
Fax: 330-633-2658

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Family Resource Institute

The Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Family Resource Institute in an international organization formed in 1990. Composed of a grassroots coalition of families and professionals concerned with fetal alcohol syndrome and its effects, the institute offers educational programs, brochures, and information packets and sponsors conferences.

Contact:

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Family Resource Institute
P.O. Box 2525
Lynwood, WA 98070
Telephone: 800-999-3429 or 206-531-2878

Learning Disabilities Association of America

The Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA) is a national, nonprofit, volunteer organization of individuals with learning disabilities, their families, and professionals. LDA works to enhance the quality of life for all individuals with learning disabilities and their families, to alleviate the restricting effects of learning disabilities, and to support research studies investigating the causes of learning disabilities. In addition to a newsletter, LDA publishes fact sheets, articles, books, and two professional journals. LDA has state and/or local affiliates in every state. Membership ($25.00/year) includes a subscription to the LDA newsletter *Newsbriefs*.

Contact:

Learning Disabilities Association of America
4156 Library Rd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15234-1349
Telephone: 412-341-1515
Internet: http://www.ldanatl.org/index.shtml

National Educational Service

The National Educational Service (NES) works with educators and youth professionals to help foster environments in which all children will succeed. The NES provides practitioners, community members, parents, and policy makers with the practical, research-based information to positively affect the lives of children and youth. NES sponsors national forums and teleconferences, produces videos, and publishes books and a newsletter *Teaching Kids Responsibility*.

Contact:

National Educational Service
1252 Loesch Rd.
Bloomington, IN 47404
Telephone: 812-336-7700
Fax: 812-336-7790

National Network for Youth

The National Network for Youth seeks to ensure that young people can be safe and grow up to lead healthy and productive lives. Members of the National Network for Youth can receive training in youth leadership, attend conferences, and participate in various projects developed by the organization. Members receive newsletters and the journal, *New Designs for Youth Development*.

Contact:

National Network for Youth
1319 F St. NW, #401
Washington, DC 20004
Telephone: 202-783-7949
Fax: 202-783-7955

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Resources for Parents

NETWorking: Web Sites to Visit

Name: NEA Health Information Network

Sponsor: National Education Association (NEA)

Description: NEA HIN provides information and training geared toward developing health-enhancing behaviors, reducing health risks, and promoting a safe and healthy environment. Materials focus on NEA members, both as individuals and educators, and on the students in their care. This site describes NEA HIN's programs on breast and cervical health, indoor air quality and drinking water quality in schools, HIV/AIDS education, tobacco control, and other health issues. Some full-text materials are provided, along with information on ordering print versions.

Address: http://www.nea.org/hin/

Name: Coalition for Asian-American Children & Families (CACF)

Sponsor: Bell Atlantic; The Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Description: CACF is a nonprofit policy and advocacy organization that seeks to improve Asian-American children's and families' access to health and human services on the public policy level through community organizing and client empowerment. It also seeks to enhance service delivery by developing culturally competent resources and training for service providers to Asian-American children and families. This site includes a directory of resources categorized by ethnic group; a full-text newsletter, *Progress;* a list of links; and a section of statistics aimed as dispelling myths about Asian-Americans.

Address: http://www.cacf.org/

Name: Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA)

Description: CIERA's mission is to improve the reading achievement of America's children by generating and disseminating theoretical, empirical, and practical solutions to persistent problems in the learning and teaching of beginning reading. This site includes a description of the organization and its programs of research; publications (some are full-text); and "Hot Lists," which provide a selection of references answering hot questions of reading education and achievement.

Address: http://www.ciera.org/

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Resources for Parents

Conference Calendar

Note: Only new conferences not previously listed in *Parent News* are included in this issue. For a full listing of conferences, workshops, and other parenting-related events, go to the PARENTING Calendar section of NPIN.

Event: National Observance of Children's Sabbaths

Sponsor: Children's Defense Fund

Date: October 16, 17, and 18

Place: Across the country

Description: The seventh annual National Observance of Children's Sabbaths is sponsored in cooperation with more than 200 denominations and religious organizations nationwide. It is designed to reaffirm the commitment of people of faith to children and to focus national attention on children. 1998's theme is Child Care Now - Gifted and Called to Raise Up Our Children. It focuses on the need for affordable and quality child care and after-school programs.

Contact:

Children's Defense Fund
Religious Affairs Office
25 E. St NW
Washington, DC 20001
Telephone: 202-662-3652
Internet: http://www.childrensdefense.org/sabbath_eval_thanks.html

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Event: National Family Literacy Day

Sponsor: National Center for Family Literacy/Toyota

Date: November 1, 1998

Place: Across the country

Description: National Family Literacy Day will be celebrated across the country with events that showcase family literacy programs and the important relationship between parents and children. Everyone is invited to join in and involve parents and children, focusing on the unique educational approach that sets your family literacy program apart from other literacy efforts.

Contact:

National Center for Family Literacy
Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200
325 West Main St.
Louisville, KY 40202-4251
Telephone: 502-584-1133
Fax: 502-584-0172
Internet: http://www.famlit.org/nfld.html

Conference: A View from All Sides

Sponsor: Wheelock College Center for Parenting Studies, The Massachusetts Children's Trust Fund, The Parenting Education Network of Massachusetts

Date: November 2, 1998

Place: Marlboro, Massachusetts

Description: This conference will explore effective models for working with parents and families at different phases of development, integration of theories and practical knowledge in work with family members at all stages of the life cycle, and recent research that sheds new light on critical issues of relevance to children, parents, and families.

Contact:

Barbara Edelin
Parenting Education Conference
c/o Edelin Events
53 Worthington Rd.
Brookline, MA 02446
Telephone: 617-806-1224

Conference: Teen Pregnancy: Public Issue, Personal Challenge

Date: November 17-19, 1998

Place: The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel, State College, Pennsylvania

Description: The 1998 Teen Pregnancy Conference will bring together researchers and practitioners in the field of adolescent development and teen pregnancy prevention. The program explores the causes of adolescent pregnancy and will discuss the kinds of programs and services that are most effective in helping teens make healthy choices about their sexuality and lives.

Contact:

Stephanie Tyworth
The Pennsylvania State University
403 Keller Building
University Park, PA 16802-1304
Telephone: 814-865-0287
Email: sst3@cde.psu.edu
Internet: http://is124.ce.psu.edu/C&I/TeenPregnancy/

Event: National Family Week

Sponsor: Family Service America and the National Association of Homes and Services for Children

Date: November 22-28, 1998

Place: Across the country

Description: Celebrated since 1970, National Family Week will focus this year's celebration on the theme "Children and Families Together." The event is designed to recognize the role of families as the building blocks of society and to encourage the support of healthy family life and family values.

Contact:

Family Service America
11700 W. Lake Park Dr.
Milwaukee, WI 53224
Telephone: 414-359-1040
Internet: http://www.familyweek.org/

Conference: Midwest Conference on Child Sexual Abuse and Incest

Date: October 5-8, 1998

Place: Marriott-Madison West, Middleton, Wisconsin

Description: The goal of the conference is to provide a wide range of information on the latest developments and treatment methods, as well as to suggest improved ways of dealing with the day-to-day challenges that occur in work with child sexual abuse and incest. The program benefits therapists, child protection workers, attorneys, law enforcement officers, medical professionals, and anyone with a need to know more about child sexual abuse and incest.

Contact:

Midwest Conference
Professional Development and Applied Studies
610 Langdon St., R. 326
Madison, WI 53703-1195
Telephone: 800-442-8108
Email: FSAT@aol.com

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  by Dr. Amy Aidman
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  Creating the Peaceable School: A Comprehensive Guide for Teaching Conflict Resolution
  by Peggy Patten
- Of Interest:
  - *Early Warning-Time Response: A Guide to Safe Schools* by Anne S. Robertson
  - *Helping Young Children Learn to Read* by Ann-Marie Clark
  - *Toward More Productive Parent Teacher Conferences* by Ann-Marie Clark
  - *Selling Out America's Children: How America Puts Profits before Values and What Parents Can Do, by David Walsh, Ph.D.* A summary for Parent News by Peggy Patten
  - *Twins in School: What Teachers Should Know.* ERIC Digest by Lilian G. Katz
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Parent News Editorial Information

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Production Editor: Emily S. Van Hyning

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Artwork by Andrea Shields.
Send comments to NPIN Webmaster

Parent News for November-December 1998

What's New on NPIN

For a listing and description of items that are new on NPIN over the last three months, see the What's New on NPIN section on the NPIN Home Page.

What's New: Resources added to NPIN during Sept-Oct 1998

Several new items have been added to several topical areas in the Resources for Parents / Full Text of Parenting-Related Materials section.

In the Parents and Schools as Partners section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *How to Promote the Science and Mathematics Achievement of Females and Minorities* [español]
  Today, it is necessary to know advanced science, mathematics, and technology to have a high-paying and satisfying career. But, unfortunately, some minority and female students have not been given the help they need to enroll and succeed in these classes in elementary and high school. Now, though, there are a variety of education policies and programs that do give these students the extra attention they need. Parents can also help in many important ways.
- *Gender Differences in Science: How Parents Can Help Close the Gender Gap*
  The gender differences in students' science attitudes and experiences are not simply a result of biology (that is, boys are not born with science knowledge.) Instead, other factors may play a role. We know that a child's social environment is important for success in science. This environment includes school, home, and social clubs/activities.
- *Closing the Gender Gap in Science*
  When asked "What don't you like about your science class?", two popular responses from middle school-aged girls are, "The tests are often too hard and I feel a lot of pressure to perform well in this class," and "We have really smart people in our class that know everything so most of us look bad in science."

In the Early Childhood Learning section, additional contents to the following resources have been added:

- *Build Positive Relationships Through Communications*
  A strong connection between families and child care providers is essential for building a positive environment for young children. But too often, parents and program staff do not effectively communicate with each other, thereby limiting opportunities for developing open, respectful, and trusting relationships.
- *Self-Esteem and Young Children: You Are the Key*It's been known for more than 100 years that a child's emotional life strongly influences his interpersonal relations, behavior, and learning. Every child needs at least one reliable, responsive adult who is connected to and available to them for the long term. Without this, children are unlikely to learn to trust, or, suffering the anguish of broken

trust, learn not to trust again.

Reviews or summaries of the following parenting-related books were added to the Parenting Resources: Books section of NPIN:

- *Adopting and Advocating for the Special Needs Child: A Guide for Parents and Professionals,* by Anne L. Babb and Rita Laws. 1997
- *Looking Forward: Games, Rhymes and Exercises to Help Children Develop Their Learning Abilities,* by Molly von Heider. 1995
- *What Did You Do at School Today? A Guide to Schooling and School Success,* by Margaret Kelly Carroll. 1998
- *Surviving Your Adolescents: How to Manage and Let Go of Your 13-18 Year Olds,* by Thomas W. Phelan. 1998
- *50 Ways to a Safer World: Everyday Actions You Can Take to Prevent Violence in Neighborhoods, Schools, and Communities,* by Patricia Occhiuzzo Giggans & Barrie Levy. 1997

Information on the following parenting-related organizations was added to the Resources for Those Who Work with Parents: Organizations section of NPIN:

- National Center For Family Literacy
- Center for a New American Dream
- Rethinking Schools
- Physicians for Social Responsibility
- Institute for Peace and Justice Related Networks: Parenting for Peace and Justice and Families Against Violence Advocacy

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Several new links to Internet resources were added in the Internet Resources for Parents and Those Who Work with Parents section.

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Parent News for November-December 1998

November's Feature

Mental Illness in Children: Part II of an Interview with Professor Edward Taylor

by Dr. Amy Aidman

In the aftermath of a series of shootings that occurred in schools over the past school year, public attention is once again focused on violent behavior among young people and what can be done to prevent it. We interviewed Professor Edward Taylor of the University of Illinois School of Social Work to get his views about the mental states of children who commit violent acts. Professor Taylor is Chair of the Mental Health Concentration within the School of Social Work. His research interests include the etiology, diagnoses, prevention, and treatment of childhood neurobiological and behavior disorders.

In September, we published Part I of Professor Taylor's comments, which focused on the roles of situations and events when children become violent, the possible role of mental illness, the warning signs, the role of attachment to moral authorities and peers, and what concerned adults can do to intervene before violence occurs. In Part II, we look at mental illness in children. This issue of Parent News *also includes an article with information about conflict resolution programs.*

AA: Are mentally ill children more violent than other children?

ET: There is no higher rate of violence among children and adults who are mentally ill than among those who are not. However, one of the things that does happen when a mentally ill child becomes violent is that oftentimes the violence is extremely aggressive. Second, it often makes no contextual sense whatsoever. We often see children attacking parents who have been wonderful parents. The mental illness causes the child to be unable to recognize the things the parents have done and gone through for him or her, and causes the child to violently attack the individual who has done the most for them. That is not an unusual scenario.

In cases where there is no mental illness, we can often see that a violent act makes contextual sense. For instance, in order to join a gang a child might think he has to commit a violent act. That's a contextual reason for the child's act of violence. In cases where there is mental illness, the violence usually makes very little sense. Depression and even problems like schizophrenia, bipolar illness during the manic phase, or psychotic types of illnesses, do not in themselves make people violent. In fact, there is a tendency in seriously mentally ill children to be more violent to themselves than to others. Approximately 15-20% of individuals with severe mental illness will make a serious attempt on their own life. The differentiation is that when these children do become violent, it usually makes little contextual sense and often is extremely aggressive, unfortunately.

AA: Is there a particular stage during childhood and youth when children are more susceptible to mental illness than at other times?

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ET: We are researching that now. One of the things we have generally believed is that serious mental illness does not occur until middle adolescence and young adulthood. The amount of research that has been done on childhood serious mental illness is extremely small. Serious mental illness is the last pediatric problem where we still use adult standards, with the exception of such things as autism. If you look at the *Diagnostic Statistical Manual* that is put out by the American Psychiatric Association—the bible for diagnosis—you'll see that there is a very thin children's section that deals mainly with autism, eating and sleeping disorders,...but the rest of it, that is anxiety, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, bipolar illness, schizophrenia—all of the standards that are used are adult standards for judging children.

Many of us feel that the reason we have missed so many children is that we have the wrong diagnostic standards, that we do not have a pediatric standard for serious mental illness. As an example, in manic episodes in bipolar illness, children tend to be hyperactive. One of the adult symptoms of mania is that you do dangerous things to yourself involving taking risks. Children make these kinds of poor judgments in different ways. Where is the line between where a child has started to develop low-grade mania and we can intervene before it becomes major mania, and normal pre-teen experimenting and chance-taking? We do not have good criteria for catching children before their mania causes them to become really destructive, for instance running away, becoming aggressive for no reason at all, breaking into houses, etc.

AA: How can labeling or mislabeling of children's mental states be avoided?

ET: We have to help the community and help teachers understand that mental illness in children is not created from bad homes, from sexual or physical abuse—while these are things that can create problems, we are talking about when children have a biological predisposition for mental illness. In order to make that diagnosis, we have to rule out physical and sexual abuse because they can cause symptoms that look like mental illness. They can cause children to have adjustment disorders, or to have post traumatic stress syndrome, or they can create a depressed or aggressive child. Most seriously mentally ill children are not dangerous, as a group, and they are not mentally ill as a result of something going on in the family. Most childhood aggression stems from an interaction between neurodevelopmental lags and social situations or crises, rather than severe biological disorders.

People should share information when they see children deteriorating. In the case of children who do not have serious mental illnesses, we have to organize the homes and the schools to be able to respond. We need to have systematic programs that catch these children before they escalate into violence. Once a child starts slugging other children at school, we certainly want to intervene, but it is often too late at that point. The big issue is setting up boundaries for the non-mentally ill child and setting up training for the family and the child. For the mentally ill child, it is important to get him into very specialized community mental health programs that deal with medications, psychotherapy, support to the parents, etc.

AA: What about children who are labeled as hyperactive or as having attention deficit disorder. Is this an example of using adult criteria to explain children's behavior?

ET: That is one of the big issues. There is a big debate going on in the mental health community as to whether we are discovering more attention deficit or whether it is something that is socially created. There are new categories. For instance, we have children who may be suffering from prenatal exposure to drugs through substance abuse by parents, especially alcohol abuse. And we have a group of children who have a minimal form of brain damage that makes attention and concentration difficult. We also have children who are living in a more dense, permissive society and who may not know how to handle situations when they are away from home and they try to expand their boundaries. These children may get thrown out of class, which is probably the worst thing that we can do. However, with large class sizes it is difficult to take extra time to experiment with what would work with these children.

Internet Resources

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
http://www.nami.org/

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Facts for Families
http://www.aacap.org/factsfam/index.htm

Justice Information Center, Juvenile Justice Page Documents, Violence and Victimization
http://www.ncjrs.org/jjvict.htm

Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html

Following are several citations chosen from a search of the ERIC database using the following search strategy:

Young Children or Preschool Children or Adolescents or Elementary School Students or Middle School Students
and
Behavior Disorders or Emotional Disturbances

EJ555176 CG551326
Differences in Depression and Self-Esteem Reported by Learning Disabled and Behavior Disordered Middle School Students.
Stanley, Patricia D.; Dai, Yong; Nolan, Rebecca F.
Journal of Adolescence, v20 n2 p219-22 Apr 1997
ISSN: 0140-1971
Language: English
Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)
Journal Announcement: CIJMAY98
Examined differences in level of self-reported self-esteem and depression between learning-disabled (LD) and behavior-disordered (BD) middle school students (N=61). Results indicate that BD students reported unrealistically high self-esteem, whereas LD students reported significantly lower self-esteem than did the BD students. Both groups reported mild depression. (RJM)
Descriptors: Adolescents; *Behavior Disorders; Comparative Analysis; *Depression (Psychology); Intermediate Grades; Junior High Schools; *Learning Disabilities; Middle Schools; Peer Relationship; *Self Esteem; Student Attitudes
Identifiers: *Middle School Students

EJ553882 EC617461
Challenges in Conducting Family-Centered Mental Health Services Research.
Koroloff, Nancy M.; Friesen, Barbara J.

Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, v5 n3 p130-37 Fall 1997
ISSN: 1063-4266
Language: English
Document Type: REVIEW LITERATURE (070); JOURNAL ARTICLE (080)
Journal Announcement: CIJAPR98
This introductory article analyzes the challenges facing researchers as they respond to the ideas that guide family-centered services and incorporate these themes into research focused on improving services for children with emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders. The fit between traditional mental health research and family centered services is examined. (Author/CR)
Descriptors: *Behavior Disorders; Children; *Emotional Disturbances; Exceptional Child Research; *Family Involvement; *Family Programs; *Mental Health Programs; Psychological Studies; *Research Design; Theory Practice Relationship

EJ553880 EC617459
Psychopathology in Children and Adolescents with Developmental Disorders.
Hardan, Antonio; Sahl, Robert
Research in Developmental Disabilities, v18 n5 p369-82 Sep-Oct 1997
ISSN: 0891-4222
Language: English
Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)
Journal Announcement: CIJAPR98
A study of 233 children with developmental disorders and mental illness found that the most common psychiatric diagnoses were oppositional defiant disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Pica, organic mental disorder, and autism were more often encountered in low functioning individuals, while depressive and speech/language disorders were found more in high functioning subjects. (Author/CR)
Descriptors: Adolescents; *Attention Deficit Disorders; Autism; *Behavior Disorders; Children; *Clinical Diagnosis; Correlation; Depression (Psychology); Language Impairments; *Mental Disorders; *Mental Retardation; Predictor Variables; *Severity (of Disability)

EJ552727 PS526856
Treating Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion in Children.
Akande, Adebowale
Early Child Development and Care, v132 p75-91 May 1997
Language: English
Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); POSITION PAPER (120)
Journal Announcement: CIJMAR98
Reviews behavioral and cognitive interventions that are potential models for the treatment of anger and impulsivity in brain injured patients, including a multicomponent treatment approach coupled with cognitive interventions. Proposes strategies to establish a therapeutic relationship with angry, impulsive patients. Examines models for treating anger, including implosive therapy, overcorrection, cognitive behavior modification, and rational emotive behavior therapy. (Author/KB)
Descriptors: *Anger; Behavior Disorders; Behavior Modification; *Children; Clinical Psychology; Cognitive Restructuring; Counselor Client Relationship; Desensitization; Extinction (Psychology); Mental Disorders; *Neurological Impairments; Positive

Reinforcement; Psychological Services; *Psychotherapy; Punishment; Rational Emotive Therapy; Self Control; Timeout
Identifiers: Differential Reinforcement of Other Behaviors; Impulsiveness; Overcorrection; Response Cost

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Accessing the Full-Text of ERIC Journal Articles

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Community Spotlight

Creating the Peaceable School: A Comprehensive Program for Teaching Conflict Resolution

by Peggy Patten

An increasing number of schools are implementing conflict resolution programs to teach youth the skills needed to resolve differences without violence. The authors of the "Creating a Peaceable School" program envision a peaceable school where the following five qualities identified by Kreidler (1984) are present: cooperation, communication, tolerance, positive emotional expression, and conflict resolution. The "Creating a Peaceable School" program is organized around six skill areas. The program contains a number of activities and strategies to be used in whole class discussions, learning center work, and class meetings to help students develop a knowledge base and acquire the skills critical to peaceful conflict resolution.

While the classroom teacher is the key player in providing the learning opportunities required to create a peaceable environment in the school and in modeling the behaviors expected of a peacemaker, every adult in the school environment—principal, subject specialist, counselor, social worker, psychologist, secretary, supervisor, and so on—is a potential teacher of the concepts and behaviors of peace. The authors contend that the broadest goals of the "Creating a Peaceable School" program are realized when the program is applied consistently on a school-wide basis, building on knowledge and skills each year as students progress from grade level to grade level.

The six fundamental skill areas to "Creating a Peaceable School" are described below. The term *teacher* refers both to the classroom teacher and to others in the school environment who are in a position to teach by their example.

1. Building a peaceable climate.

A first step is for teachers to develop a classroom environment conducive to constructive conflict management. To reach this goal teachers learn to establish a cooperative context for the classroom and to manage student behavior without coercion. A cooperative context—in contrast to a competitive context—involves goals that all students and teachers are committed to achieving. The teacher implements cooperative learning activities that require collaboration and promote interdependence among class members, in order to foster a community-of-learners atmosphere. This kind of atmosphere is in contrast to classrooms in which the primary reward system is assigning grades, which leads to a competitive context where achievement of one is at the expense of others. In competitive classrooms, an environment of winners and losers is created.

Secondly, the teacher in the peaceable school transfers the responsibility for acceptable behavior to the students—not through force or domination, but through reason and support. Behavioral expectations can be stated in terms of rights and responsibilities that apply to all members of the school environment. The teacher in the peaceable school uses discipline, not punishment, to encourage appropriate behavior. Where punishment expresses power of an authority and is imposed by an authority, discipline is based on logical or natural consequences and comes from within the individual, with responsibility assumed by the individual.

2. Understanding conflict.

The authors of "Creating a Peaceable School" explain conflict as a natural, vital part of life which arises when one or more of the following basic needs identified by William Glasser (1984) go unmet:

- *The need for belonging* - fulfilled by loving, sharing, and cooperating with others
- *The need for power* - fulfilled by achieving, accomplishing, and being recognized and respected
- *The need for freedom* - fulfilled by making choices in our lives
- *The need for fun* - fulfilled by laughing and playing

The "Creating a Peaceable School" program encourages principled responses to conflict which focus on interests instead of positions. This response to conflict works toward a gradual consensus on a joint resolution without the costs of digging into positions or destroying relationships.

3. Understanding peace and peacemaking.

In the peaceable school, peace is viewed as a behavior rather than an outcome or goal. Adults and children can incorporate peacemaking into their daily lives by learning and practicing the principles of conflict resolution. The authors credit the Harvard Negotiation Project, founded by Roger Fisher and William Ury, for the principles of conflict resolution suggested in "Creating a Peaceable School." These basic principles are intended to separate the people from the problem, focus on interests and not positions, invent options for mutual gain, and foster the use of objective criteria.

4. Mediation.

Mediation is a process in which a neutral third party—a mediator—helps disputants resolve their conflicts peaceably. In the peaceable school, mediation is presented as both a strategy for use within the classroom and as a school-wide vehicle for resolving conflicts. Training activities introduce a six-step mediation process designed to allow students to gain the skills to act as neutral third parties in facilitating conflicts between disputants. With the support of the classroom teacher, very young students can help classmates mediate conflicts in a classroom-based program.

5. Negotiation.

Negotiation is a process in which disputing parties communicate directly with each other to resolve the conflict peaceably. In the peaceable school, students learn the skills necessary to communicate their thoughts and feelings about a conflict and to follow a step-by-step negotiation procedure designed to ensure a balanced exchange. The more students become empowered to resolve their differences peacefully, the authors believe, the more responsibly they behave.

6. Group problem solving.

This strategy is used in "Creating a Peaceable School" when a conflict affects many or all members of a group, such as a class of students. Two basic principles govern the group problem-solving strategy:

- The discussion is always directed toward solving the problem.
- The solution never includes punishment or fault finding.

Richard Bodine (RB), one of the authors of the "Creating a Peaceable School" (CPS) program and a trainer for the National Center for Conflict Resolution Education, talked to Parent News (PN) staff about his experience training others to use the CPS approach.

PN: Approximately how many schools have you provided training on the CPS program?

RB: That's a hard question to answer for two reasons. First, we've been involved in training since 1993 even before the CPS materials were published. Secondly, many of the training events we conduct are intended to teach school personnel who will train teams within school districts or within schools. I estimate that I have done over 500 training events, and I am one of four trainers. Most recently we have formed partnerships with states who then sponsor the CPS training statewide.

PN: Are the majority of schools you work with elementary, middle, or secondary level schools?

RB: There is much more interest in CPS at the elementary school level. At the middle and secondary level, peer mediation programs are more popular. Peer mediation is a good way to start. But peer mediation programs are limited in their effect, and primarily benefit the peer mediators themselves. A school-wide approach to conflict resolution, such as CPS, is much more far-reaching and provides life skills to the whole student population.

PN: What are some of the conditions that lead to optimum outcomes? In other words, when does CPS realize its fullest goal of creating a peaceable school?

RB: To be successful in creating a peaceable school there needs to be a critical mass of adults and children trained so that they use these skills every day. Other essential components include staff buy-in to the program and staff training, and developing or changing the school climate in ways that support the program. We talk often in the training program about the need for building a peaceable school and classroom climate.

PN: What conditions typically predict failure to achieve the goal of a peaceable school? Are there situations where the CPS approach doesn't work?

RB: The program does not work if staff see it as a way to "fix kids" or view it only as a way to address problems that kids have. Often people get involved in conflict resolution programs as a way to solve their school's problems rather than as a method to provide life skills. Schools will never eliminate conflict. What we hope to help them do is to develop a constructive approach to addressing conflict.

We often see programs start because of the enthusiasm of two or three people. The program will not work if staff view it simply as another thing to add to their duties. Staff must be willing to make a long-term commitment to the goals of the program. There must also be an active buy-in from the school's leadership. A school principal or administrator must want the CPS program to be part of the school.

PN: Are there any evaluative data to support gains of the CPS approach?

RB: Evaluative data are in the formative stages. There are two CPS programs in effect: the one we developed here through the Illinois Institute for Dispute Resolution and one which operates out of New

York called the "Resolving Conflict Creatively" program (RCCP). The RCCP has a couple of national evaluation studies in place. One is through the Centers for Disease Control and another is by METIS Associates. What the early data from those studies say is that kids in schools develop more negative behaviors and attitudes as the school year goes along, but that those students who are exposed to the CPS program get *less worse* than those who are not exposed.

It is hard to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of a comprehensive, school-wide program such as CPS because a really good program is fully integrated into the very fiber of the school operation. There are a lot more evaluative data on peer mediation services, for example, which are easier to monitor.

PN: What do you hear from teachers or administrators about using the CPS approach?

RB: The overriding message we hear from schools is that when kids have this training they do use it. Administrators tell us that they feel their school climate changes over time. They don't eliminate problems within their school, but they tell us their problems don't get as large as they once did.

Teachers tell us that children's problems still catch their attention, but that they are able to prompt students to take responsibility for resolving their conflict more effectively on their own. They acknowledge that they must spend time initially helping children learn the skills required for conflict resolution, but the time spent is far less than the time spent in crisis management when conflict is not resolved satisfactorily.

PN: The CPS program was developed and used in schools years before the recent spate of school yard violence. Have you changed the way training on the CPS approach is conducted as a result of these recent incidents?

RB: There were nine incidents of school yard shootings last year. In every one of these situations someone was told something was going to happen but did not report the information either because they didn't believe it or because they didn't know how to respond to these "calls for help." Certainly violence has precipitated an interest in conflict resolution programs. I suspect people are out there grasping at straws, which is not the best way to approach programs such as CPS. CPS is a proactive approach to resolving conflict rather than a reactive approach.

There is no quick fix to violence prevention. The National Center for Conflict Resolution Education was originally funded by the Department of Justice to work in schools. This is the first year they have partnered with the Department of Education to do so.

The message from most violence prevention efforts is "say no to violence." In contrast, conflict resolution tells kids what they can do before doing something stupid. Conflict resolution is about creating an effective citizenry. That is the best approach to violence prevention.

Becky McCabe (BM) was an elementary teacher for 16 years before becoming principal of Leal Elementary School in Urbana, Illinois. Parent News (PN) staff talked to Ms. McCabe about her experience using the "Creating a Peaceable School" approach in her classroom, and her perspective on the CPS approach as principal.

PN: What were some of the benefits of the "Creating a Peaceable School" program to Leal School?

BM: The CPS program assumes a school-wide approach to conflict resolution. The training that Leal teachers participated in brought the school together. Before the training workshops we hadn't talked much about children's needs as a school community. Many years earlier we had developed Leal's "Rights and Responsibilities" statement, which provided a strong basis for student behavior as a school, but we needed to share an understanding and belief of what all children need and why conflict happens. We discovered that our statement of Rights and Responsibilities was not enough. The CPS training helped us to accept conflict as a natural part of life. We now call our school peaceable, not peaceful, which implies a lack of conflict.

PN: What did you find most valuable about the CPS approach as a classroom teacher?

BM: The CPS approach to conflict changed much of my thinking as a classroom teacher. Although I had been a fairly successful teacher for many years before formally adopting the CPS program, I realized after the training that I missed many opportunities to use discipline as a learning experience rather than punishment. That is key. When we use discipline methods that are punitive, we simply teach children that grownups are more powerful than they are.

I can provide a good example of this distinction from my classroom days. A child in my second-grade classroom spent a good deal of her time avoiding her class work. The consequence I applied (in my pre-CPS days) was for her to miss out on recess to complete the assigned work. There was little or no dialogue between us about her behavior or the consequence.

Once I incorporated the CPS approach into my classroom behavior, this situation became a learning opportunity for that child as well as for the rest of us. I had a meeting over lunchtime with her and her mother, and I discovered that this student was embarrassed because she could not read. She avoided her work in class so the other children would not see how she struggled. With the student's permission we held a class meeting to discuss her concerns. During this meeting classmates shared areas they had difficulty with—completing math assignments, playing sports on the playground, singing out loud. The other students in the class agreed that this student could ask them for help with reading when she needed to.

Once this student's insecurities about reading were acknowledged by her classmates, her avoidance behavior stopped, although I still needed to establish clear goals for getting her work done and consequences for times when those goals weren't met. Learning took place in addressing this "behavior problem." The student learned to accept the challenges she faced and to ask for assistance when needed. Other students in the class learned how to offer help when asked.

Previously I missed so many opportunities to help children solve their own problems. That skill—learning to resolve one's problems successfully—is one that children will need to use throughout their lives. This new approach opened my eyes to lots of teachable moments that I had previously overlooked.

PN: Didn't this approach take a great deal of your teaching time?

BM: Yes and no. The first 6 weeks of a school year is the time when you are building your classroom community. If you want to have a community that works, a peaceable learning environment, you must have a system of conflict resolution in place. Yes, it takes time to teach children these skills, but ultimately they begin to internalize these systems. Children, like adults, cannot work on other matters such as math or spelling facts when they are angry. Children, like adults, can only repress strong emotions for so long.

PN: What do you find most valuable about the CPS approach as a principal? What effect does it have on the overall school climate?

BM: The CPS approach works best when it is adopted school-wide. It helps that I have learned and used the same approach to conflict resolution as a classroom teacher in the school. As principal I try to model appropriate behavior for all children at all times. I also realize that the CPS approach allows the school staff—teachers and support staff—to talk about the needs of children and adults at a higher level. Adults are better able to resolve conflicts with one another. These are conflicts which would have been ignored or misinterpreted in past years. The "Creating a Peaceable School" program initially becomes a philosophy of individual classrooms. Then it becomes the philosophy of the school, and now we find that it is a philosophy of how adults treat one another. That makes Leal School a good place to be for all.

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A press release from the Tennessee Department of Education describing their statewide Peaceable Schools Training is available at:
http://www.state.tn.us/education/nr070698.htm

The full text of "Conflict Resolution Education: A Guide to Implementing Programs in Schools, Youth-Serving Organizations, and Community and Juvenile Justice Settings" is available at:
http://www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles/160935.txt

"Preparing Teachers for Conflict Resolution in the Schools," by Kathryn L. Girard
http://www.ericsp.org/news1.html

Educators for Social Responsibility has a variety of conflict resolution resources for educators at the early childhood, elementary, and secondary levels, as well as for parents. They can be reached at:

Educators for Social Responsibility
23 Garden St.
Cambridge, MA 02138
800-370-2515
http://euphoria.benjerry.com/esr/index.html

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Of Interest

Early Warning-Time Response: A Guide to Safe Schools

by Anne S. Robertson

A recently released guide to safe schools is available through the U.S. Department of Education and is located at http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html. Kevin Dywer, president-elect of the National Association of School Psychologists, worked to help develop the guide along with the U.S. Departments of Justice, Education, and Health and Human Services. Dywer suggests that the guide can contribute to developing a nurturing school climate for all children. A nurturing school environment is one that works to promote positive relationships among students and staff, includes extra security and counseling, and has high standards for achievement, discipline, before- and after-school activities, and family and community involvement.

Dywer also indicates that the guide should be helpful in identifying warning signs of potentially violent students. The goal is not to label students, but to provide educators with some of the warning signs so that they can intervene quickly with certain children while developing a nurturing school climate for all children. Some of the signs of a student in distress include:

- social withdrawal
- harboring extreme feelings of isolation and peer rejection
- expressing thoughts about violence in writings, drawings, and poetry
- having been a victim of violence
- feeling persecuted or picked on
- performing poorly or showing little interest in school
- expressing uncontrolled anger
- engaging in chronic bullying behaviors
- having a previous history of discipline problems
- expressing intense prejudice
- using alcohol or drugs
- affiliating with a gang
- making a specific and detailed threat to use violence

For more information

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Of Interest

Helping Young Children Learn to Read

by Ann-Marie Clark

For some children, learning to read can be difficult. As a parent, you may become concerned if your child has not mastered the names and sounds of the letters of the alphabet by the first half of first grade. It may be helpful to discuss these concerns with your child's teacher. Keep in mind that just as children learn to walk and talk at different ages, they also learn to read at different ages. Children also learn to read in different ways.

Some children, for example, seem to pay more attention to how language sounds and the differences created by different letters and letter combinations. Others seem to remember the whole word or phrase all at once, as if they took a mental picture of the word. Some children have great difficulty isolating the various sounds in words or blending the sounds of letters together to form a word. Others have trouble remembering the way a word looks from one time to the next, even on the same page!

As a parent, you are in a good position to help your child learn to read. With some children, the process requires extreme patience. Young children may respond best to short practice sessions that are conducted at a regular time each day. Fifteen to twenty minutes of your undivided attention can demonstrate to your child that learning to read is important to you. If you have trouble working with a child because of resistance, it may be helpful to find someone to work with your child who is less involved emotionally.

Learning to Read Involves Taking a Risk

Initially, reading is a process of trial and error for children. They may guess a word to see if it makes sense in a sentence, using letter sounds as clues. However, some children may be too fearful to risk making a guess. Others may not have a sufficient grasp of letter-to-sound correspondence, or they may be limited in their use of the language.

Children who do not master these basics by the middle of first grade often notice that they are behind their peers in reading performance. Unfortunately, they may become self-conscious of their delays and begin to see themselves as non-readers. If they acquire a non-reader image of themselves, they may become less inclined to "take a guess" about words while reading aloud or working alone, for fear that they may make a mistake.

Rereading Selections for Confidence

Children who are less confident readers may benefit from reading short books or stories with which they are already familiar. Rereading books is not a waste of time. Rather, it can provide children with a sense of confidence in their reading ability and contribute to their fluency as readers (Kemp, 1992). It also helps them to master a basic sight word vocabulary (e.g., *and, the, for, by,* and *with*).

In some cases, it may appear to you that the child has merely memorized a book and is not really "reading" the material. However, this memorization serves as a bridge for the child from the spoken word to the printed word. You might assist the child who has memorized a story by asking her to slow down and point to each word as it is said out loud. You might also say a word in the "memorized" text and ask the child to locate it.

Often children who are struggling with a word are asked to "sound it out." This can be a laborious process. It may disrupt the flow of reading so that the child loses his train of thought or the natural spoken rhythm of the sentence. It is often more helpful if you simply supply the unknown word for the child. However, if the child is rereading a passage, already knows the context, and stumbles on a word, taking the time to notice the letter sounds of the unknown word can be a good practice for improving reading ability.

Phonics or Whole Language

The two most common approaches used by schools for reading instruction are *phonics* and *whole language.* Learning to read with phonics involves specific skills, particularly being able to isolate and then blend together the sounds of letters and letter clusters. Learning to read with *whole language* involves all four processes of language learning: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In whole language instruction, children try to *write* what they can *say,* and then *read* it back to an adult. They may use invented spelling to write what they *hear.* Invented spelling can be a bridge for children to correct spelling and has not been shown to deter learning to spell correctly later on.

Educators are beginning to recognize the value of both approaches in teaching young children to read. A recent article in *Education Week,* for example, talks about using key elements of both approaches. (Go to *Education's Week's* home page at http://www.edweek.org/. Select the "archives" section and complete a search using the term "reading wars." The first article in the list, "3/25/98 - News: NRC Panel Urges End to Reading Wars," is the mentioned article.) The experts are beginning to suggest that it is probably best not to limit children's access to only one approach (Anderson & Fordham, 1991; Michel, 1994). More than likely, children will respond best to the approach that is most suited to their way of learning.

Tips for Parents in Helping Beginning Readers

Learning Sounds in Context

Some children are able to hear and see spelling patterns in words easily: *The cat sat on the mat. The pig has on a wig.* They may enjoy making lists of "word families"(*make, take, lake, fake, rake*). To avoid boring repetition, it is a good idea to take this method a step further and have your child make up more meaningful sentences with the words. It is helpful for children to work with the sounds of words in context (Lapp & Flood, 1997).

Phonics instruction can be taken from words in a sentence that is meaningful for the child. For example, if the child is rereading a familiar story, you might ask the child to pick out several words that begin with the same sound as *birthday.* In this way the child is asked to match the beginning sounds of familiar words, rather than to isolate the sound of "b."

This same technique can be used with ending sounds as well. Reading poetry out loud to children is one of the best ways to help them become aware of matching sounds in words. After they are able to identify rhyming words in two lines of poetry, they may be ready to attend to the similarities in spelling patterns.

Children's poetry offers a playful and rich context for children to become more familiar with the connections between sounds and letters, and can offer a reason for repetitions which themselves are less monotonous. Ultimately, phonics serves as only one part of a total reading program in which meaning for the reader is an essential part of all reading instruction (Artley, 1996).

Learning Lists of Sight Words

If the child has a long list of words to learn to read, it may be best to break down the list into sections (Smith, 1991). For example, it may help to transfer the words to index cards, lay the cards out on the floor, and have the child pick up the cards she is able to read. Sometimes children prefer to make their own word cards to read along with the ones assigned by the teacher. For example, *monster, race car,* or *dolly* might be added to a list of *am, was, be,* and *saw.*

Sometimes it helps for you and your child to alternate lists or pages when reading orally, especially if the selection is long. Children enjoy "catching" your mistakes if you forewarn them that you might make one. It is also helpful for you to read to children on a regular basis and to be seen by your child in the act of reading (Landsberg, 1992).

Keeping a Journal

One way to help children learn to read is to write (with the child) a few short sentences each day in a journal. It is most effective when the child dictates to you what to write down. Next the child copies what you wrote and then illustrates the short "story." For example:

> *We had pizza for dinner. It was hot. Dad ate three pieces.*
> *My dog is brown. His name is Rex. He barks at the mailman.*
> *Mom likes to sew. She is sewing a dress for me. It is blue.*
> *My brother plays the piano. Sometimes I sing with him.*

Each time you and the child write together, the child is encouraged to review and reread some of the previous entries. The picture that the child draws will become a reminder of what the text says. In this way the child becomes familiar with common words that reappear frequently in reading (such as is, am, did, had, or it). She will begin to remember these words because of their frequent reoccurrence in natural speech. This method helps keep the repetition needed to remember these words from becoming monotonous or artificial.

Conclusion

Like other important learning tasks, learning to read takes persistence and patience, and some children require more than others. Keep in mind that we want not only for children to learn reading skills, but also, at the same time, to develop the disposition to be readers. Excessive pressures may damage that disposition. Children who do not learn to read as early or as rapidly as their peers might be helped most by a caring parent's patient encouragement and frequent practice. Children often benefit from review and repetitions of reading material they have mastered. It may help them to build a sense of confidence in themselves as readers.

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Of Interest

Toward More Productive Parent Teacher Conferences

by Ann-Marie Clark

Parent teacher conferences are often a cause for concern for everyone involved, including children, parents, and teachers. Children just beginning their school experience may be wary of the idea of parents and teachers talking about them behind closed doors. Parents may feel uncomfortable about going inside their child's classroom, sitting in small chairs, and listening to reports of their child's conduct and class work. Teachers, especially in their first years of teaching, may be uncertain about how to handle unhappy or critical parents. They may feel uneasy about telling anxious parents about their children's problems.

If children are experiencing problems at school, it is important for parents and teachers to share the responsibility for creating a working relationship that fosters children's learning (Katz et al., 1996). Teachers can encourage open communication by letting parents know when they are available and how they may be contacted, inviting parents to participate in classroom activities, and eliciting parents' concerns and interests prior to a scheduled conference. Parents can introduce themselves early in the school year, letting the teacher know when and how they can be reached, and asking how they can begin to become involved in classroom and school activities.

Open and frequent communication between parents and teachers helps to ensure that parent teacher conferences do not catch anyone by surprise. Both parents and teachers benefit from being well prepared in advance of the meeting (Coleman, 1991) so that issues that may otherwise be emotionally charged can be handled in a trusting atmosphere. Assuring parents of confidentiality also helps maintain trust. It may be helpful for both teachers and parents to keep in mind that for many parents, it is a fundamental part of the parenting role to be their child's strongest advocate (Katz, 1995).

When Learning Problems Occur, Parents Can:

Consider the Context. Ask the teacher to be specific about the problem and the context in which the problem occurs. Children who experience difficulty in learning may do so for many reasons. They may be experiencing frustrations with peers, with family arrangements, or with specific subjects or learning situations. It may be beneficial for teachers to pinpoint areas of both strength and weakness that the child displays. Parents can then work with teachers to identify specific situations in which the difficulty occurs.

Identify What Helps. Ask the teacher what is being done to help the child overcome the problem. Hopefully the teacher has tried several strategies to help the child overcome the learning problem. Sometimes small steps, such as moving a child to a different place in the room or shortening an assignment, can make a difference. Often when children are experiencing frustration, they do not know how to let the teacher know that they do not understand what is expected of them. It may be helpful to have the teacher talk to the child about his or her problem along with the parent.

Make a Plan. Ask the teacher what you can specifically do to help the child at home. With the teacher, list three or four concrete actions to do every day. It may be as simple as a change in the evening schedule so that the child has 15 to 20 minutes of the parent's time to read together or work on math homework. A regular schedule is usually beneficial to a child. A younger child might benefit from two shorter periods of work rather than one long session. For example, it may be more effective to learn to spell three new words a night than to study ten or twelve words the night before a test.

Schedule a Follow-up Conference. Before leaving the conference, it is a good idea to agree with the teacher on what is expected of the child, what the teacher will do to help, and what the parent will do. Sometimes it is helpful to involve the child in these decisions so that he or she can see that the teacher and parents are working together to help alleviate the problem. A follow-up conference can be used to review the effectiveness of the plan and to formulate a new plan, if necessary. Scheduling another meeting after a period of three to four weeks signals to the child that both parents and teachers are highly interested in taking effective steps to help him or her achieve success in learning. This strategy can serve to encourage a child who may have become discouraged from repeated experiences of failure early in the school year.

When Behavior Problems Occur, Parents Can:

Specify the Behavior. Ask the teacher to be specific about the type of misbehavior in which your child engages. Aggressive behavior may be a child's way of getting something from a peer rather than of intentionally bringing harm to another person (Jewett, 1992). Inability to follow directions may be due to a hearing or language problem rather than direct defiance of the teacher. It is helpful to consider many viewpoints when pinpointing the behavior in question.

Examine the Context. Ask the teacher to help determine when, where, and why the misbehavior is occurring. Try to identify with the teacher any events that may have contributed to a specific incident of misconduct. Try to take into consideration anything that might be contributing to the situation: the influence of peers, time of day, family problems, illness or fatigue, or changes in schedule or after-school activities. Children may be more prone to misconduct when they are tired or irritated.

Examine the Teacher's Expectations. Ask the teacher to be as specific as possible about what a child does that is different from what the teacher expects in a particular situation. Sometimes, if the teacher assumes that a child is being intentionally aggressive, her expectation of aggressive acts can become part of the problem and can lead to a "recursive cycle" (Katz, 1995) in which children come to fulfill the expectations set for them. Try to determine with the teacher if the child is capable of meeting the teacher's positive expectations.

Make a Plan. Ask the teacher what can be done by both the teacher and the child to help solve the problem. It may be helpful to have the teacher call the parent when the problem happens again, in order to discuss possible solutions. Parents and teachers can look together at alternative short-term solutions. Often very young children may not understand what it expected of them in specific situations and may need added explanations and encouragement to meet a teacher's expectations. When young children understand the procedures to follow to complete a task, they may be better able to act without guidance. Knowing what to expect and what is expected of them increases children's ability to monitor their own behavior.

Plan a Follow-Up Conference. Children are more likely to be concerned about improving their behavior if they believe their parents care about how they behave. When a parent shows enough concern to try a plan of action and then meet again with the teacher to evaluate its effectiveness, it sends a strong message to the child that he or she is expected to behave at school. It is sometimes beneficial to include the child in the follow-up conference, too, so that the child might make possible suggestions. Knowing that parents and teachers care enough to meet repeatedly about a problem may be more motivating than any material reward a child is offered (Kohn, 1993).

When There Are No Concerns: Questions for Parents to Ask Teachers

In some cases, parent teacher conferences may not be very informative, especially if the teacher reports that the child has no problems. Some parents may repeatedly hear that they "have nothing to worry about." While this may sound reassuring, these parents may come away without the necessary information to help their children continue to make steady progress in school. When parents anticipate such an outcome from a conference, they may want to be prepared to ask some of the following questions:

What does my child do that surprises you? Very often this question can reveal to parents what expectations the teacher has for the child. Sometimes a child will behave quite differently at school than at home, so the parent may be surprised, as well.

What is my child reluctant to do? This question may reveal to the parents more about the child's interests and dislikes than they would ordinarily know. The question may encourage the teacher to talk to the parent about the child's academic and social preferences.

What is a goal you would like to see my child achieve? This question can serve as a springboard for parents and teachers to develop a plan to work together to help a child set and reach a specific outcome. Even well-behaved and high-achieving children may benefit from setting goals in areas that need improvement or in which they might excel.

More effective parent teacher conferences occur in an atmosphere of trust, where confidentiality is ensured and parents and teachers treat each other with respect. When children have learning or behavioral problems, it may be helpful to examine the context in which they occur and then to formulate a plan of action. Sometimes it is helpful to include the child in setting goals and reviewing the effectiveness of plans. Children are more likely to succeed in school if they can view their parents and teachers working together cooperatively.

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Parent News for November-December 1998

Of Interest

Selling Out America's Children: How America Puts Profits before Values and What Parents Can Do
by David Walsh, Ph.D.

A Summary for *Parent News*

by Peggy Patten

Parents often must struggle against the materialism and desire for instant gratification that is part of modern American culture. David Walsh's book **Selling Out America's Children: How America Puts Profits before Values and What Parents Can Do** helps explain why parents find it increasingly difficult to counteract society's harmful messages. This article highlights the key points in Dr. Walsh's argument.

Society has always depended upon parents to socialize children about the ways of the community and to provide children with their first lessons in trust, responsibility, reciprocity, discipline, and self-restraint. These traits, according to Walsh, are very important from the larger society's point of view; they are essential if a free democratic society is to flourish. However, as Walsh points out, many societal messages run contrary to these values. Rather than promote reciprocity, many societal messages extol selfishness and cut-throat competition. Rather than promote discipline and self-restraint, many societal messages glorify instant gratification, violence, and a "win at all costs" attitude.

Walsh discusses at length the power of advertising and shares some fascinating findings about the advertising industry. His research revealed that advertisers believe a child becomes a consumer by about age 3; that an estimated 6.8 billion dollars were spent in 1992 alone by advertisers targeting the 4- to 12-year-old age group; and that many of the products being sold to children have violence as a theme (including 80% of Nintendo video games sold in the United States, according to a National Coalition on Television Violence study done in 1989). The advertising industry, Walsh says, is in the business of influencing behavior and has developed sophisticated and powerful technologies to do so. If positive values are reinforced in the process, fine. But if they are undermined in the process, according to Walsh, the advertising industry feels no responsibility.

Walsh discusses the way children acquire values through observation, imitation, and trial and error interactions. For thousands of years, Walsh says, this pattern of observation and imitation happened directly between significant adults and children. When children were older, they would try out behaviors with and learn from their peers. But the introduction of television has had an enormous impact on children's learning. In 1950 only 10% of American families had a television set in their homes. By the end of the decade, that percentage had risen to 90%. In the 1980s cable television, videocassettes, and interactive video games were introduced, adding to the kinds of mass media available to children. Walsh cites studies which report that the American child spends 35 hours a week watching television and playing video games. Television has become a prominent and powerfully attractive teacher of today's youth.

What kind of values are espoused by television? For example, Walsh describes seven harmful messages from TV that he thinks parents should be concerned about:

- **Violence.** The average child in the United States witnesses over 200,000 acts of violence on television by the time he or she is 18 years old.
- **Sex.** Sexual activity is frequently portrayed on prime time television in a light, humorous context between unmarried people rather than as an aspect of a responsible relationship.
- **Wealth and Materialism.** Happiness is often portrayed both in commercials and in the content of programs as coming from money and lots of material possessions.
- **Rewards without Work.** Relationships between work and affluence are seldom seen in television characters.
- **Drugs and Alcohol.** Using drugs or alcohol was shown in a positive light in 121 scenes in a study sampling 36 hours of television.
- **Selfishness.** Individual happiness, rather than helping behaviors or showing concern, was emphasized in nearly 60% of TV commercials.
- **Aggression and Disrespect.** Glorification of an "in your face" approach to relationships portrays aggression and disrespect as humorous and attractive.

Walsh recognizes that it is unrealistic to recommend throwing out the television set. He encourages parents instead to help children learn how to use television appropriately and offers the following suggestions.

1) Avoid using television as a babysitter.

2) Limit the use of TV.

3) Watch TV together.

4) Examine how you use television yourself. Do you "channel surf" to pass time, for example? Be sure there is a program on worth watching.

5) Establish clear ground rules about times when TV can be watched.

6) Use the VCR to your advantage by fast forwarding through commercials on shows taped previously.

7) Do not give the television the most prominent location in the house.

8) Keep television out of children's rooms.

9) Make sure you know what a movie or video is about and its rating before giving permission to your children to view it.

10) Use the radio, records, or tapes when the television is not on to help children experience pleasure from

other forms of media.

11) Provide alternative activities that are enjoyable with the entire family.

Children by their nature, Walsh says, are impetuous and impatient. They are already inclined to want their needs filled immediately. One of the tasks of parenting is to help children learn to be self-disciplined, to help them learn to tame their drives and needs. Walsh discusses two crucial ingredients that contribute to self-discipline: the ability to delay gratification and the ability to seek and achieve balance—values that often seem at odds with modern American culture's emphasis on instant gratification and excess.

Children are conditioned to expect instant reward and gratification in multiple ways. They learn this when messages from the media tell them they should be able to have what they want right now, when they see difficult problems on television solved quickly, when they are allowed a treat with every trip to the grocery store, and when they observe adults overusing credit cards or shopping constantly without real need.

Self-discipline, like many other skills, is developed over time with practice, repetition, and reinforcement. Without self-discipline children are left without the ability to manage strong emotions such as anger. They may not learn the value of persistence in working toward goals requiring time and effort, such as learning to play an instrument or learning to work through difficult school work assignments.

The need to win and to come in first at any cost is an example of how values such as success and excellence can get out of balance. Competition is not necessarily unhealthy, Walsh says. It becomes excessive, however, when coaches recruit child athletes at younger ages for all star teams, when children are pushed to read at earlier ages, when summer camps offer accelerated and intensive courses, or when parents push to get their children into the "right" schools before the age of 5.

A consumerist culture teaches children that happiness is found in material possessions and material success. Walsh reports that the percentage of college freshmen who stated that it was "essential" or "very important" to be well off financially increased by more than 67% over the past two decades. America's reliance on credit cards (credit card debt more than tripled from eight billion dollars to over a quarter of a trillion dollars from 1980 to 1990, Walsh reports) could be seen to reflect values of materialism and instant gratification.

Households with children are the most lucrative consumer segment in the United States, Walsh says. As a result, they are a primary target of those with goods or services to sell, including fast food restaurants (94% of 6- to 14-year-olds visit one monthly) and the tobacco industry (youth represent the only segment of the population with an increasing rate of new smokers, Walsh says).

Walsh offers the following suggestions to parents to help counter consumerism and competition:

Examine our own behaviors.
What are we modeling when we buy on impulse, overextend our credit, shop for recreation, or always pursue the latest model car or gadget? What do we teach children when we are consumed by work and relentlessly pursue the next income level?

Keep consumer impulses within bounds.
Do we help children understand how advertising works and how to counter its messages? Do we teach children that long-lasting happiness is found in other than material possessions?

Spend twice as much time with kids and half as much money on them.

Do we take the easy way out by buying our kids off instead of reprioritizing time commitments?

Set boundaries and limits.
Do we assume responsibility for setting limits on children's desire to consume?

Help children learn about the responsibility that comes with having money.
Do we help children learn about budgeting, saving, and waiting before making a purchase?

Walsh talks about the need to help children strive for a balance between considering their own needs and those of others. While we want children to have enough self-confidence and self-respect to express their opinions and needs, we also want children to learn that others have equally valuable rights, desires, and needs that sometimes conflict with their own. Too often the "What's in it for me?" attitude leads to virtues like sacrifice and altruism being viewed as foolish. Walsh cites a Search Institute survey which found that 33% of responding teens reported that they had not done a favor for free for anyone in the previous month.

What can parents do to support the values of generosity, cooperation, and sacrifice? Walsh suggests that parents need to model altruistic behavior, assign chores and responsibilities, ask children to contribute earnings to others (a church or a charity, for instance), and encourage involvement in community service.

It is tempting, Walsh says, to look for quick fixes and for scapegoats to blame for the materialism and competition in our society: parents blame teachers, teachers blame parents, both blame political leaders, who in turn blame one another. Walsh points out that there is enough blame to go around for everyone. Walsh believes that parents can override many of the harmful influences of modern culture by taking the following actions:

1. Being honest with ourselves about the values we are espousing and teaching our children.
2. Developing traditions that reinforce core values and provide a counterbalance to the values of the marketplace.
3. Examining our priorities in terms of how we spend our time.
4. Being willing to say "no" to children's unreasonable requests.
5. Being clear about our intolerance for antisocial behavior.
6. Limiting the amount of television and video games children are exposed to.
7. Teaching our children to be media literate.
8. Teaching our children how to budget and save their money.
9. Making sure our teenagers' jobs do not interfere with more important things.
10. Linking responsibilities with rights so children learn that the two go together.
11. Reading to our children.
12. Exposing our children to heroes who embody healthy values.
13. Staying engaged with our teenagers.
14. Talking to other parents about our shared concerns for children.

Online resources on this and related topics:

Television Violence: Content, Context, and Consequences by Amy Aidman
http://ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1997/aidman97.html

Video Games and Children by Bernard Cesarone
http://ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1994/cesaro94.html

Center for a New American Dream

"How do kids get so caught up in consumerism?"
http://www.newdream.org/newsletter/swimme.html

"The joy of responsible gift-giving"
http://www.newdream.org/newsletter/gifts.html

Other resources:

Coppock, J., & Staeheli, J. (1991). Unplug the Christmas machine: A guide to putting love and joy back into your holiday celebration. Quill Books.

Rosenberg, E. (1994). From Barney to Super Nintendo: What to do when your child wants it all? PTA Today, May/June, 5-7.

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Parent News for November-December 1998

Of Interest

Twins in School: What Teachers Should Know

by Lilian G. Katz

October 1998 EDO-PS-98-10

ERIC/EECE Digests are short reports on topics of current interest in education. Digests are targeted to teachers, administrators, parents, policy makers, and other practitioners. They are designed to provide an overview of information on a given topic and references to items that provide more detailed information. Reviewed by subject experts who are content specialists in the field, the digests are funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) of the U.S. Department of Education.

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The incidence of multiple births has increased dramatically in the past two decades. The birth rate for twins, who constitute the most common kind of multiple births, increased 42% from 1980 to 1994 (Lytton, Singh, & Gallagher, 1995). Given this trend, it seems reasonable to assume that many teachers will have twins and other multiple siblings in their classes at some point in their classroom careers.

To a large extent, the available research on twins stems from a long tradition of studies focused on the nature-nurture debates. These studies look at twins reared together and apart and attempt to ascertain the relative influence of genetic and environmental influences on personality development. Research on the effects of twins' separation in school and other practical questions is as yet very limited. Nevertheless, difficult decisions about their education have to be made by school districts, principals, and teachers while new research is awaited. This Digest offers some pointers for educators facing the challenges of educating multiples.

Different Types of Twins and Other Multiples

There are two basic types of twins and other multiples. Identical twins are defined as monozygotic because they are the result of the split of a single fertilized ovum. Dizygotic twins, usually referred to as fraternal twins, are the result of the fertilization of two separate ova, as in other siblings born years apart. There are four types of identical twins, depending upon how early in the development of the ovum its division occurs. The earlier in the division, the more alike the individuals are likely to be physically. In the case of other multiples, as for example in the case of triplets, two of the three may be identical, but more typically all three are as different as any other three siblings.

These variations in the extent to which siblings from the same pregnancy resemble each other suggest that teachers may want to keep in mind that most multiples are as unique as any other set of siblings, although their psychosocial situation differs from that of singletons. Identical twins will be more behaviorally alike on average than fraternal twins. It is also the case that many multiple-birth children are born prematurely and have low birth weight. Many of the same kinds of problems typical of single premature low birth weight children will be typical of premature twins. However, for parents of multiples, even if they are not subject to the strains related to the risks of prematurity, the stresses and strains of the early care of multiples are substantial and appear to have some short-term effects on the children's development (Lytton, Singh, & Gallagher, 1995). Because twins are the most typical type of multiples, that term is used in the discussion below, although much of the discussion applies equally to other multiple-birth siblings.

Separating Twins in School

One of the most frequently asked questions by preschool and elementary teachers and principals is whether the classroom separation of multiples should be encouraged. Dreyer (1991) and Brodkin (1997) point out that many schools and preschool programs have a fixed policy of separating twins. In other schools, however, the decision may be left to the principal or to the teachers.

Is it necessary for schools and preschool programs to have a strict policy about separating twins? Dreyer concludes her discussion of what little research is available on this question by stating that "Twins feel that the best policy is no policy at all" (Dreyer, 1991, p. 6). Similarly, most parents seem to feel that such decisions should be determined on a case-by-case basis and that a rigid policy should be avoided.

Even in very small preschools and elementary schools that have only one class per age group, teachers often wonder if they should encourage the twins to engage in separate activities, participate in different learning center activities, sit at different tables for meals, and team up with other peers.

Making Separate Decisions

The Parents of Multiple Births Association, Inc., of Canada provides a list of possible circumstances to be considered when making a decision about separation (Dreyer, 1991, p. 11). Included in this list are questions such as whether the twins' "togetherness" might hinder the social development of one or both. Thus, parents and the teacher might ask whether, by about the age of 5, each of the twins is capable of initiating and maintaining satisfying relationships with nonsibling peers. If the answer is "yes," then separation would not be warranted. If the answer is "no," then separation, perhaps for part of the day, might be attempted on an experimental basis. Separation may also be considered under the following circumstances:

* Classmates engage in frequent comparisons of the pair, and the comparisons provoke negative feelings in either twin. Constant comparison of twins is one of the greatest sources of distress to twins and one of the most difficult things for parents and teachers to resist. Although parents, and even teachers, often compare different-age siblings, the fact that the twins are the same age as well as frequently of the same gender considerably heightens the temptation to draw comparisons. Even at the preschool age, twins are likely to be aware of such comparisons and may become more competitive than other siblings. Most twins ultimately weather school situations successfully, but if one of the multiples typically comes out on the poorer end of these comparisons, a pattern of discouragement may develop and could lead to a pattern of "learned helplessness" (Burhans & Dweck, 1995).

* There is no evidence that twins are more disruptive than non-twins. However, if disruptions do occur and

standard procedures for handling disruptive behavior
fail to alleviate the pattern, separation might be one course of action to consider.

* A female twin "over-mothers" her male co-twin. In the case of fraternal opposite-sex twins, females tend to be the more dominant of the two and more critical of their twin brothers, who "appreciated their twin sister's guidance but felt somewhat threatened by their 'superiority'" (Dreyer, 1991, p. 3).

* Many twins develop a pattern of helping each other through both academic and social predicaments. Educators might want to consider how separation will affect twins who are accustomed to helping each other. Teachers might observe the twins closely in the classroom to ensure that one twin does not help the other excessively, or that the one being helped does not become too dependent on the other. In the case of preschoolers, perhaps the best advice is to make the separation gradual, if it is done at all.

There are other situations in which separation might be a poor or untimely decision. For example, if the pair is undergoing particular stresses within the family, or if there are health concerns for one or both twins, separation may place unnecessary stress on twins.

In the case of school-age twins, it is a good idea to check their own preferences about separation. Although their feelings on the issue should be considered, these feelings should be put in a larger perspective of the long-term development of each member of the multiple sibling group.

Placement decisions should also take into account the views of parents. Some parents will have strong feelings on the matter (Segal & Russell, 1992). However, it is a good idea to keep in mind that parents may not be fully aware of how their children behave in the classroom environment. If parents disagree on the best course of action, teachers may want to listen carefully to each, make suggestions for them to consider, invite them to observe their children in the classroom, and suggest a short-term experiment of separating or keeping the twins together. During that time, the twins can be closely observed and evaluated by teachers and parents. In this way, the school personnel and the parents can address the issue as a team focused on the long-term best interests of the children.

Look Alikes

Ideally, as suggested by guidelines for the education of multiple birth children recently issued by the National Organization of Mothers of Twins Club, Inc. (1998), educators should learn to recognize each child in a set of multiples without resorting to extraordinary measures, such as requiring identical twins to wear name tags, different color clothes, or different hair styles. However, for teachers struggling with large classes, this ideal may take much time and effort to achieve. In the case of twins who look very much alike, and who often behave alike, a teacher's inability to distinguish between the twins and to use the correct name of the child may be a source of stress for the children and the teacher. It may be preferable to consult the parents about the possibility of helping the teacher to make the correct identification by dressing the twins differently, giving them different haircuts or shirt colors, or providing other consistently different patterns in their appearance. Speaking as a twin, the experience of being called by the other's name can be very annoying!

For More Information

Brodkin, Adele M. (1997). Twins, together too much? *Scholastic Early Childhood Today, 12*(3), 25-27. EJ 556 013.

Burhans, Karen Klein, & Dweck, Carol S. (1995). Helplessness in early childhood: The role of contingent worth. *Child Development, 66*(6), 1719-1738. EJ 515 254.

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Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. ED 389 416.

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Twins in school, Apart or together. (1997). Berkeley, CA: Twin Services.

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Of Interest

Children's Books

The Table Where Rich People Sit, by Byrd Baylor
illustrated by Peter Parnall
published by Atheneum Books, 1994
ISBN 0-684-19653-0
suitable for K-6th grade

Mountain Girl knows that her family isn't rich. In fact, that's why she has called a family meeting around the homemade table. The subject is money, and she thinks they don't have enough of it. "But Mountain Girl," says Dad, "I thought you knew how rich we are." As her parents begin to add things up their way—putting proper values on sunsets and the changing colors of mountains, the feel of the wind and the smell of the rain, the sound of coyotes and the sight of eagles—Mountain Girl begins to see her family's status in a new light.

The Greatest Table: A Banquet to Fight against Hunger, by Michael J. Rosen
published by Harcourt Brace & Company, 1994
suitable for preK-6th grade

The Greatest Table is a collection of art by sixteen beloved children's book illustrators, inspired by Michael Rosen's poem of grace and thanksgiving. As each page—and leaf of the table—opens, children and their families share a feast as generous in spirit as it is in food. All proceeds from *The Greatest Table* aid Share Our Strength, one of the nation's leading hunger-relief organizations.

Music, Music for Everyone, by Vera Williams
published by Greenwillow Books, 1984
ISBN 0-688-02603-6
suitable for preK-2nd grade

Rosa's grandma is sick and must stay upstairs in bed. And so the big chair in the living room is often empty. And the money jar—in which the family saved their change to buy the big red chair and Rosa's accordion—is empty too. All extra money must be used to take care of Grandma. After school Rosa and her friends Leora, Mae, and Jenny often make music for Grandma. She says their playing makes her feel like a girl again dancing at a party. And that is the beginning of Rosa's wonderful idea.

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Resources for Parents

Guides, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

Doerre, Yvonne A.; Mihaly, Lisa Klee. (1996). ***Home Sweet Home: Building Collaborations to Keep Families Together.***

Local child welfare and public housing agencies have the resources to collaborate in helping the growing number of American families for whom stable housing is beyond reach. This Child Welfare League of America manual offers suggestions for helping child welfare and housing agencies build strong collaborations to improve services for families in both systems. The manual demonstrates successful models for linking subsidized housing with supportive social services, suggests ways to bring health care providers into partnership with child welfare and housing, and describes methods of prioritizing federal housing subsidies for families identified by a child welfare agency. Following an introduction describing the benefits of collaboration for both family stability and agencies and outlining challenges to housing/child welfare collaboration, Part 1 of the manual describes resources available to help families and children stay together when housing problems threaten separation or delayed reunification, including the Section 8 Program and the Family Unification Program. This section also describes establishing Section 8 priorities for welfare families, evaluating the housing program, providing comprehensive family support, and innovative state and local efforts. Part 2 discusses the inclusion of health care services in the welfare/housing partnership and focuses on the Federally Qualified Health Center program. Twelve appendices include program contacts, sample forms used by highlighted programs, and preliminary data on needs and characteristics of family housing in the Family Unification Program. PS026497

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9050 Junction Dr.
P.O. Box 2019
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-2019
Telephone: 800-407-6273 or 301-617-7825
Fax: 301-206-9789
Email: cwla@pmds.com
(Stock No. 6533, $14.95)

Cotton, Kathleen. (1998). ***Lifelong Learning Skills for the Elementary School Child: Tips for Parents. Booklet 2.***

When parents take an active part in their children's education, it has a positive impact on their children's academic achievement, attitudes toward learning and school, confidence as a learner, and social behavior. Parents can also help children develop the lifelong learning skills and attitudes they will need in a rapidly changing society. This booklet examines lifelong learning, and provides suggestions for learning activities for parents to engage in with their elementary school-age children. Part 1 of the booklet, "Background

Information," defines lifelong learning, explains why it is important, and details the characteristics of a lifelong learner with regard to attitudes, learning skills, and an understanding of their own learning styles. Part 2, "Learning Activities for Parents and Children," provides specific ideas for parents to work directly with their children in the areas of learning styles, development of positive attitudes toward learning, reading, writing, speaking, listening, research and independent learning skills, study skills, learning strategies, and higher-order thinking skills. Part 3 lists resources for parents and gives availability information. Appendices contain essential vocabulary, an assignment organizer, and a list of words commonly used in assignment and test directions. PS026760

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Petersen, Evelyn. (1997). ***Growing Responsible Kids: Seeds for Success.***

To teach responsible behavior means to encourage children to be motivated from the inside and to follow rules that help themselves and others. This guide, part of the "Seeds for Success" series, provides advice for parents for creating in children an inner sense of responsibility by means of nearly 100 simple activity ideas designed for use with 3- to 5-year-olds. Activities are offered in the following areas: (1) "Cultivating Self-Discipline"; (2) "Nurturing a Work Ethic"; (3) "Nurturing Family Responsibility"; (4) "Dealing with Family Challenges"; (5) "Nurturing Community Responsibility"; (6) "Introducing Social Skills"; (7) "Nurturing Anti-Bias Attitudes"; and (8) "Cultivating Environmental Awareness." PS026752

Totline Publications
P.O. Box 2853
Torrance, CA 90509-9851
Telephone: 800-421-5565

Shores, Elizabeth F. (1998). ***A Call to Action: Family Involvement as a Critical Component of Teacher Education Programs.***

Noting that greater family participation in early childhood programs is a widely-held goal, this report addresses the fundamental skills that early childhood teachers and caregivers need to fully involve families in their young children's lives at school and the child care center. The report defines those skills in four areas of a community of learners: communication skills, understanding of cultural diversity, family-based curriculum development, and partnerships in education governance. It also recommends that preservice and inservice programs do more to build all four of those cornerstones in professional development programs. The report begins with a summary of the historic role of parents in early childhood education and the history of public policy concerning parent participation. Much of this discussion is drawn from the literature on family involvement in special education. The report includes a review of family systems theory to reinforce the premise that families exist on a continuum of needs and desires for involvement in early childhood education. It summarizes what practitioners need to know to promote meaningful participation across the continuum, and discusses strategies for including family involvement in preservice and inservice professional development. PS026673

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Tallahassee, FL 32301
Telephone: 800-352-6001

Landsverk, Ruth Anne. (1998). ***Families, Communities, Schools. Learning Together 2, Spring 1998.***

The goal of the Families in Education Program of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is to increase awareness of the need for schools to involve parents as partners in the education of their children. This Spring 1998 parents' and teachers' guide encourages school staff to reflect on how well their school or district offers opportunities for all parents to contribute or participate at some level and allows for parent discussions and networking. Articles from this issue contain information on the following topics: tips for safe "traveling" on the Internet; enhancing father involvement in their children's education; obtaining the support of the business community in implementing a Family Learning Day; using Parent Quality Interviews to improve educational quality; tips for school volunteering; how Department of Education initiatives support parent involvement; using rock art as a family summer learning opportunity; involving families when students move to new schools; and the "Adopt a Nutrition Professional" program. Also included is a description of the types of family-community partnerships with schools, a checklist for schools on making the family-community partnership work, and a description of Wisconsin's Family-Community-School Partnership efforts. PS026646

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(Bulletin No. 98221)

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Book Summaries and Reviews

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1. Babb, L. Anne, & Laws, Rita. (1997). ***Adopting and Advocating for the Special Needs Child: A Guide for Parents and Professionals.*** **Greenwood Publishing Group, 88 Post Rd. West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881; Telephone: 800-225-5800 or 203-226-3571; Email: bookinfo@greenwood.com; Internet: http://www.greenwood.com ($35).**

A 1980 federal law made adopting and raising special needs children affordable even for persons with limited means. However, many prospective adopters never complete the adoption process because of red tape, regulations, and institutional lethargy; among the adults who complete a home study or placement, lack of support services and advocacy training sometimes leads to heartbreak and adoption failure. Intended for parents and adoption professionals, this book bridges the gap between the desire to help a waiting child and the reality of America's special needs adoption system. The book provides information on starting the adoption process and locating whatever additional information and support are needed. Chapters in the book are: (1) "Special Needs Adoption in the United States"; (2) "Choosing the Type of Child You Will Adopt"; (3) "Finding a Child"; (4) "Preparing for Parenthood"; (5) "Early Placement: What Parents Experience"; (6) "Early Placement: What Children Experience"; (7) "Living with Special Needs"; (8) "Finances"; (9) "Working with Educators and Schools"; (10) "Transracial Adoption"; (11) "International Special Needs Adoption"; (12) "When Things Go Wrong"; and (13) "Special Needs, Special Situations." A list of resource organizations and print materials is appended. (Contains 44 references.) PS026659

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2. von Heider, Molly. (1995). ***Looking Forward: Games, Rhymes and Exercises to Help Children Develop Their Learning Abilities.*** **Anthroposophical Press, Lindisfarne Books, 3390 Route 9, Hudson, NY 12534; Telephone: 518-851-2054.**

The games, rhymes, songs, and exercises for children collected in this book are based on Rudolf Steiner's educational philosophy and are designed to lay the foundation for sound later learning. The book's chapters are: (1) "Learning Aids"; (2) "The Early Years"; (3) "Foot Exercises: Kindergarten or Class I, 5-7 Years"; (4) "Finger Games"; (5) "Looking Ahead"; (6) "Classes I and II: Ages 6, 7 and 8"; (7) "Skipping Games"; (8) "Working with Anticipation"; (9) "Rhythm-Repetition"; (10) "The Language of Form"; (11) "Straight Lines and Curves"; (12) "Class III: 8-9 Years"; (13) "Class IV: 9-10 Years (Rhythm, Grammar, Time and Space, Memory Training, Speech Exercises, Games)"; and (14) "Class V: Ages 10-11 (Activities and Games)." Included are sections on earth education and gardening with young children (by Hugh Peters), as well as a list of books for teachers. PS026626

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3. Carroll, Margaret Kelly. (1998). ***What Did You Do At School Today? A Guide to Schooling and***

***School Success.* Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Ltd., 2600 S. First St., Springfield, IL 62794-9265 (Cloth, $51.95; Paper, $39.95).**

Written for parents, this book discusses current practice in preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools. The first section, entitled "Learning," defines and discusses learning, memory, learning styles, study skills, and homework. The second section, entitled "What Goes on in Schools?," discusses inclusion, cooperative learning, whole-language instruction, middle schools, multidisciplinary study, bilingual programs, educational assessment, and parents' rights. The chapters in the third section, "Family Involvement in Learning," are: (1) "Preparing Children for School," which discusses language, motor, and social development; (2) "Learning Wherever You Are," which discusses everyday learning opportunities; (3) "Learning Whenever You Can," which discusses learning during the spring and summer, and offers suggestions for studying space exploration; (4) "Holiday Preparation," which discusses presents, commercials, stress and depression, and Halloween; and (5) "Challenges of Parenting," which discusses a number of different topics, including bullying, sibling rivalry, health and safety, self-esteem, and discipline. The chapters in the fourth section, "Family Links with School," are: (1) "Funding Schools"; (2) "School Selection"; (3) "Parent Involvement in Schools"; (4) "Academic Fairs and Parent Involvement"; (5) "Parent-Teacher Conferences"; (6) "Going to School," which includes discussions of starting school, school readiness, and school supplies; and (7) "Families and Academic Subjects." The book concludes with suggestions for parents for keeping up with a child's current school experiences. PS026793

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4. Phelan, Thomas W. (1998). *Surviving Your Adolescents: How to Manage and Let Go of Your 13-18 Year Olds. (Revised Second Edition).*

Noting that parents raising adolescents need to know when to be quiet and when to act, as well as what to do when something needs to be done, this guide for parents offers guidelines for handling the complex situations and dilemmas that teenagers often present. Topics covered include managing teenage risk-taking, the relationship between parent-teen communication and adolescent safety, and guidelines for specific areas such as clothing and dating. The six sections of the book are: (1) "A Different Planet," including what is normal adolescent behavior; (2) "Communication and Safety," including risk behaviors such as substance experimentation and driving, and four negative parenting tactics—spontaneous problem discussions, nagging, insight transplants, and arguing; (3) "Problems!," including how a parent's state of mind about his or her own life affects interaction with adolescents, and four roles parents play—observer, advisor, negotiator, and director; (4) "Emotional Blackmail," on adolescents' testing and manipulating and how to manage that testing and manipulation; (5) "House Rules," detailing guidelines for specific problems and presenting vignettes of the guidelines in action; and (6) "Ten Years from Now," on likely outcomes for even the most trying adolescent. PS026633

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5. Giggans, Patricia Occhiuzzo, & Levy, Barrie. (1997). *50 Ways to a Safer World: Everyday Actions You Can Take to Prevent Violence in Neighborhoods, Schools, and Communities.* Seal Press, 3131 Western Ave., Suite 410, Seattle, WA 98121; Telephone: 800-754-0271 or 206-283-7844; Fax: 206-285-9410; Email: sealpress@scn.org; Internet: http://www.sealpress.com ($10).

Written as a response to fear, helplessness, and the sense of powerlessness that can be caused by pervasive violence in society, this book provides ideas for actions that individuals, along with friends, family, and neighbors, can take to prevent violence and create a safer environment. The book is divided into three main parts. Part 1, "Joining Together to Prevent Violence," focuses on how to assess the safety of neighborhoods, homes, and schools, and offers a range of strategies for action. Sections in Part 1 cover neighborhood-, family-, and school-related strategies. Part 2, "Safety to Go," contains the "nuts and bolts" of everyday safety at work, traveling, at a party, or on a date. Part 3, "Concerns of Our Times," addresses the complex issues of preventing violence in society, including alcohol and drugs, youth violence, violence against women, and hate violence. The final part of the book focuses on personal commitment and action. Each section contains references. PS026809

Publications cited with a PS number are cited in the ERIC database. Most documents are available in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 1,000 locations worldwide and can be ordered through EDRS: 800-443-ERIC. Journal articles are available from the original journal, interlibrary loan services, or article reproduction clearinghouses such as UnCover (800-787-7070), UMI (800-732-0616), or ISI (800-523-1850).

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Resources for Parents

Organizations

National Center For Family Literacy

The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) is a nonprofit educational organization headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky. It was founded in 1989 through a grant from the William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust. Its mission is to advance and support family literacy services across the United States through programming, training, research, advocacy, and dissemination of information about family literacy.

Contact:

National Center for Family Literacy
Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200
325 West Main St.
Louisville, KY 40202-4251
Telephone: 502-584-1133
Fax: 502-584-0172
Internet: http://www.famlit.org/

Center for a New American Dream

The Center for a New American Dream is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to reducing and shifting North American consumption while fostering opportunities for people to lead more secure and fulfilling lives. The organization helps individuals, communities, and businesses establish sustainable practices that will ensure a healthy planet for future generations. The Center was founded in 1997 on the principle that a highly materialistic definition of the American dream is undermining our families, communities, and the natural world. The Center serves as a hub for numerous local and national organizations promoting cultural, behavioral, industrial, and spiritual changes. It distributes educational materials and conducts campaigns to help individuals make constructive changes within their homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

Center for a New American Dream
6930 Carroll Ave., Suite 900
Takoma Park, MD 20912
Telephone: 301-891-ENUF (3683)
Fax: 301-891-3684

Internet: http://www.newdream.org/

Rethinking Schools

Rethinking Schools began as a local effort by Milwaukee-area teachers to improve education in their own classrooms and schools but to also help shape reform throughout the public school system in the United States. Since its founding in 1986, it has grown into a nationally prominent publisher of educational materials, with subscribers in all 50 states, all 10 Canadian provinces, and many other countries. Its Web site includes a selection of links to Web sites for educators and activists.

1001 E. Keefe Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53212
Telephone: 964-9646 or 800-669-4192
Fax: 414-964-7220
Internet: http://www.rethinkingschools.org/

Physicians for Social Responsibility

Physicians for Social Responsibility is an organization comprised of members of the medical community. PSR affirms the physician's role as a teacher and is committed to the physical and psychological health of humanity. A number of resources related to children's environment and health and violence prevention are available.

1101 14th Street NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005
Telehone: 202- 898-0150
Fax: 202-898-0172
Internet: http://www.psr.org/

Institute for Peace and Justice Related Networks: Parenting for Peace and Justice and Families Against Violence Advocacy

The Institute For Peace and Justice (IPJ) is an independent, interfaith, nonprofit organization founded in 1970 as a response to the realities of war, racism, and global economic injustice. It offers resources for schools, families, churches, and other communities of faith.

Institute for Peace and Justice
4144 Lindell Blvd., #408
St. Louis, MO 63108
Telephone: 314-533-4445
Fax: 314-533-1017

Internet: http://members.aol.com/ppjn/index.html

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Resources for Parents

NETWorking: Web Sites to Visit

Name: Kids Can Learn!

Sponsor: Kids Can Learn, Inc., in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication, The Center for Adolescent Studies at Indiana University, and The Family Learning Association

Description: This site provides educational materials and services for parents and teachers to help their children and students become happy, effective, and highly-motivated. Articles, citations from the ERIC database, and other resources are provided in the following areas: adolescent issues, parental involvement, learning problems, controversial education issues, reading and writing, lesson plans, art, music, science, math, and history and social studies.

Address: http://www.kidscanlearn.com/

Name: KEN: National Mental Health Services Knowledge Exchange Network

Sponsor: Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Description: KEN provides information about mental health via toll-free telephone services, an electronic bulletin board, and publications. The National Center for Mental Health Services developed KEN for users of mental health services and their families, the general public, policy makers, providers, and the media. KEN is a national, one-stop source of information and resources on prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services for mental illness. The section on "Children's Campaign" contains a glossary and full-text fact sheets and other resources on mental illness in children.

Address: http://www.mentalhealth.org/index.htm

Name: Dr. Koop's Community

Sponsor: Empower Health Corporation

Description: This site is an interactive source for health information, offering full-text articles and advice on a wide range of medical topics, including children's health. It also offers personalized medical news, an index of health sites on the Web, "Health and Wellness" centers, an interactive pharmacy, and an "Ask Dr. Koop" message board.

Address: http://www.drkoop.com/

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